



International Bible Study Commentary

Verse-by-Verse Bible Lessons Thru the Bible

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1 John 2:20-29 Commentary **New Revised Standard Version**

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further follow the verse-by-verse [International Bible Study Commentary](#). **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the *International Bible Study Commentary* website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Study Forum](#).

(1 John 2:20) But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge.

In 1 Samuel 2:2, Hannah prayed, "There is no Holy One like the LORD, no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God." In Job 6:10, Job said, "I have not denied the words of the Holy One." In Proverbs 9:10, the Proverbs teach, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight." Isaiah consistently and often spoke of God as the Holy One, and in Isaiah 43:15, God spoke and said to him, "I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King." And in Isaiah 48:17, we read, "Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who teaches you for your own good, who leads you in the way you should go." The Bible consistently teaches God is One and believers are commanded to worship One God, the Holy One.

The New Testament reveals the Holy One is Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Son of God came into the world as the promised Hebrew Messiah: Jesus the Messiah (Christ in Greek), which means

Anointed One. Jesus came in human flesh as a real human being—fully God and fully man. Jesus was anointed at His baptism with the Holy Spirit (see Matthew 3:16-17). John wrote his letter to those who believed in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and he wrote that the Holy One had anointed them. From Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost, we learn that the Holy One anoints believers with the Holy Spirit when they repent and believe in Jesus. In Acts 2:38-39, Luke wrote, “Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.’” In the Old Testament, priests, prophets, and kings were anointed with oil. In the New Testament, believers in Jesus Christ were anointed with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in 1 Peter 2:9, Peter wrote of everyone who follows Jesus: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” John wrote his letter to those who knew Jesus Christ and the teachings of Jesus Christ, truths they had learned from him and/or the apostles and evangelists who had taught to them. Those who trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior know and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Holy One has anointed them with the Holy Spirit who indwells them. In John 2:18-19, John had written that the antichrists showed they did not belong to the fellowship of true believers when they went out from them, when they left the Church physically and/or spiritually. Because those who truly believe in Jesus Christ have knowledge of Jesus Christ and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, they do not need to learn anything from antichrists. Today, believers in Jesus Christ have the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and Christian teachers to help them understand the Bible; therefore, they do not need to learn anything from those who have left the Church by denying Jesus Christ and the Bible’s teachings or from anyone who wants to replace the Christian faith with a human philosophy or a different religion.

(1 John 2:21) I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and you know that no lie comes from the truth.

John wrote his letter to reinforce the truth in the minds of those who knew the truth. They knew that God's word, the Scriptures, were true (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17). They knew that what John had taught them (see the Gospel of John) was true. They surely knew these words of Jesus in John 14:6, were true, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." They knew from sound reason that no lie can come from the truth. Furthermore, the Bible teaches in Numbers 23:19, "*God is not a human being, that he should lie, or a mortal, that he should change his mind. Has he promised, and will he not do it? Has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?*" In Titus 1:1-2, Paul wrote that he was "a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and the *knowledge of the truth* that is in accordance with godliness, in the hope of eternal life that *God, who never lies*, promised before the ages began." The writer of Hebrews 6:18 said, "it is impossible that God would prove false." We follow Jesus because Jesus and the Bible are true.

(1 John 2:22) Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

John knew that he must warn his readers about those who had left the Church claiming that they knew additional truths about God or truths that contradicted what those who trusted in Jesus Christ and the gospel had learned. Paul wrote about this strongly in Galatians 1:9, "As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!"

[In John's day, most of these antichrists would have been called Gnostics. They claimed they had additional secret knowledge about Jesus that they would impart to those who joined with them and went through their initiation. They also denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh as a real human being. Their denial that Jesus had come in the flesh led them to teach many ridiculous ideas, such as, when Jesus walked, He left no footprints, or He did not really suffer and die on the cross as a real human being. For almost 2000 years and even today, antichrists have taught many different false ideas about Jesus, the Bible, and the Christian faith.]

First, John wrote strongly that a person who denies that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, is a liar. Today, when we hear someone deny Jesus Christ is the Person the Bible reveals Him to be, we know that person is a liar. We must not believe what they teach. Furthermore, we must warn others about their teachings, so they do not lead true believers away from Jesus Christ and the fellowship of true believers, the Church. Second, John wrote that antichrists deny the Father and the Son. In His life and teachings, Jesus revealed God the Father and revealed himself as the Son of God. Antichrists deny what the Bible clearly and explicitly teaches about Jesus the Son and God the Father. Antichrists, many who will remain in a church (but who will often start a new church), often begin using new names acceptable to them for the new god they worship while still calling themselves “Christians,” and they will begin teaching others in a church to believe in their new false god. For this reason and others, no one should ever say that the different world’s religions believe in the same God. As religions, Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism deny the Father and the Son. These religions teach something different from what Jesus Christ revealed and taught in the flesh by word and deed. They deny New Testament teaching.

(1 John 2:23) No one who denies the Son has the Father; everyone who confesses the Son has the Father also.

Even today, some religions and churches that claim to be Christian deny that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary. They deny parts or all of what the angel told Mary in Luke 1:31-33, “And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Some will deny what Jesus taught about himself in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of

God.” Jesus is the ONLY Son of God, those who believe in Jesus as revealed in the Bible become children of God by adoption. Paul affirmed the above facts in Galatians 4:4-6, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” If someone does not confess Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, they do not have the Father. If they do not have the Father and the Son, they do not have the Holy Spirit: they do not know or have the Holy One within them.

(1 John 2:24) Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father.

John, the other apostles, and the evangelists taught the truth about Jesus Christ—what John’s readers had “heard from the beginning.” Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these apostles and other writers recorded the truth in the Bible. Believers often call the Bible, the Word of God written. For the truth of the Bible to abide or remain in our hearts and minds, we must not turn away from the truth and embrace lies and false teachings or live in disobedience to the truth. Furthermore, to abide in the truth, we must keep affirming the truths in the Bible when we pray, worship God, teach, and share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. John did not shy away from teaching the same truths repeatedly or from using different approaches to teach the same truths. When we do what John taught the truth of Jesus Christ and the Bible will remain in us.

Second, John wrote that if the truth of God abides in us then we will abide or remain in the Son and in the Father. We will remain in the Family of God, in the Father and the Son and with all who love God. We will remain children of God and act like children of God. We will think, act, behave, and live differently, for we will adopt and live according to the values that the Father and the Son impart to us through the Holy Spirit and through the Bible. If we were to go into the palace of a king, we would act accordingly. The followers of Jesus Christ have entered the palace of the King of kings, the Holy One; therefore, they think and act as the Father, the Son, and the

Holy Spirit lead them to act according to the truth. By abiding in us, the Holy Spirit and Jesus will live spiritually within us and continue to influence what we say and do. In Colossians 1:27, Paul wrote about Christ indwelling us, saying, “Christ in you [is] the hope of glory.” Where the Son and the Spirit abide the Father also abides. While maintaining our personal identity, believers in Jesus Christ live within the Holy One and the Holy One lives in them. In John 2:21, Jesus spoke of His body as the temple of God. In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Paul wrote that the believer’s body is the temple of God: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

(1 John 2:25) And this is what he has promised us, eternal life.

Jesus Christ promised eternal life, a new quality of life as well as everlasting life, to all who believe in Him as their Lord and Savior. In John 17:3, Jesus taught, “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” When the Father and the Son abide in the believer, they come to know the Father and the Son, the only true God. We know them because we abide in them, and they abide in us.

(1 John 2:26) I write these things to you concerning those who would deceive you.

John did not want those who had committed themselves to believing in and obeying Jesus the Messiah to be deceived or misled by liars and antichrists, so he wrote that this was one of the reasons he had sent them his letter.

(1 John 2:27) As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him.

In John 14:15-18, Jesus taught, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him,

because he abides with you, and he will be in you. I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.” The anointing John’s readers and all those who love and keep Jesus’ commandments have received is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit abides with believers and in believers. Since He is the Spirit of truth, Jesus also abides with and in believers. The world cannot receive, know, or see the Holy Spirit; therefore, believers in Jesus Christ should never believe in or follow an antichrist (one who will lie and try to deceive them). John wrote that the followers of Jesus did not need an antichrist (in his day a Gnostic) to teach them anything. They did not need to learn any “new truths,” “secret truths,” or philosophies, and neither do believers today. What they had learned from the apostles contained all the truths they (and we) needed to receive and enjoy eternal life. The followers of Jesus today need to believe the Bible and remain spiritually and mentally close to Jesus. Believers need to love the Father and the Son with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and the Holy Spirit within them will enable them to obey God and love God and others with the love of God in them.

(1 John 2:28) And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he is revealed we may have confidence and not be put to shame before him at his coming.

John repeatedly stated what he wanted his readers, his dear children, to do. He wanted them to remain in Jesus spiritually, as someone might choose to physically remain in a house or a church building or physically and spiritually among other children of God. He promised the followers of Jesus that if they lived in and with Jesus daily that they would become so much like Jesus in thought, speech, and action that when He came for them (either when their body died and their spirit left to go with Jesus, or when Jesus came again as He promised) that they could face Jesus with confidence in Jesus instead of with shame for the ways they had behaved.

(1 John 2:29) If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who does right has been born of him.

Believers know that Jesus Christ is righteous. When they see Him, they will see the One who is Righteous, the Righteous One who gave His life on the cross to save them from the eternal consequences of their sins and to save

them from living in sin. One who has truly been born again will do what is right rather than do what is lawless. In the following chapters, John will write more about what it means to be born of God, but we have learned that the Spirit and the Truth empower a person to be born of God, and those who are born from above will show they are born again by the right way they live.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What kind of person do you think John meant when he wrote, “all of you have knowledge”?
2. How did John describe the liar and the antichrist?
3. How might you explain, “No one who denies the Son has the Father,” to someone who thinks all religions worship the same God?
4. How can you make certain that what you heard from the beginning abides in you?
5. What can happen to you if what you heard from the beginning no longer abides in you?

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