"BEING CAREFUL OF WHO WE FOLLOW" Children of God #3

INTRODUCTION

In the book of 1 John, the Apostle expresses his concern for the believers. In chapter 2 he specifically warns and advises them with regard to "antichrists." These are adversaries, or opponents to the Messiah. John is the one who devised and used this term. It can specifically refer to the one who will rise to power during the last days, however here he uses it to refer to individuals who pose a threat to the faith. Today we find that there are those who would be a danger to follow, because they would lead us away from Jesus. If we are attentive to the warnings of 1 John we will be prepared to follow God faithfully and not be led astray.

Ice Breaker (Optional): Do you use social media to "follow" anyone? If so, who is top of your list?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Be CAREFUL of how you live.

Q1. Read 1 John 2:18, 26; Matthew 24:44

In 1 John 2:18 John tells his readers that "these are the last days." Even though they did not see Christ's return during their lifetimes, why was it wise for them to live with the expectation of His imminent return? (see Matthew 24:44) If you absolutely knew that Jesus would return tomorrow, what is the first thing you would do? Is there any reason not to do that today?

Q2. Read Mark 13:22; Acts 20:29-30

What are the dangers to believers described in Mark 13:22 and Acts 20:29-30? From where do some of these threats arise? (Acts 20:29) If there are some among us who might be a threat to our faith, what can you do to identify who they are? What are some ways to prepare yourself to stand firm in your faith?

Be CONFIDENT of your calling. Q3. Read 1 John 2:20, 25, 27; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; John 14:26

1 John 2:27 tells us we are anointed by the Holy One, which indicates we are called and set apart for His purposes. As part of our anointing, what has God given us as a guarantee (2 Corinthians 1:22)? Rather than

relying on others to tell us what is true or not, how do we come to the knowledge of the truth? (John 14:26)

Be CLEAR about our adversary. Q4. Read 1 John 2:18-19, 22; 1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7

How does 1 John 2 define an antichrist? To believe that "Jesus is the Christ" is to believe that he is the Anointed, the Messiah of the prophets, the Saviour sent of God, that he was, in a word, what he claimed to be. ¹ Have you personally ever confronted anyone who cast doubt on the claims of Jesus?

Q5. Read 1 John 2:24-25, 27

Finally, John appeals to his readers to "let what they had heard from the beginning abide in them." To abide means to take up residence. What does it mean to have what we've heard abide in us or for us to abide in God? How do you think one influences the other?

WRAP-UP

John was concerned that the believers he wrote to were in danger of being led astray. He advised them to be careful of how they lived, and confidant that God had indeed called them and given them the promise of eternal life. The Apostle wanted the believers to recognize that the threat to their faith could arise from within their midst but that they had been given the Holy Spirit both as a guarantee of His promise and as a guide to all truth, if only they would remain committed to Him.

Memory Verse

No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. 1 John 2:23 ESV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: ______ Pray for your group members' needs:

Challenge:

This week, try asking some people this question "Do you believe Jesus was God come in the flesh?" But be prepared to defend your faith.

¹Dictionaries :: Christ. Retrieved from <u>http://www.blueletterbible.org/https://</u> www.blueletterbible.org/search/Dictionary/viewTopic.cfm

Q1

1 John 2:18, 26 ESV - 18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. ... 26 I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.

Matthew 24:44 ESV - 44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Q2

Mark 13:22 ESV - 22 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

Acts 20:29-30 ESV - 29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Q3

1 John 2:20, 25, 27 ESV - 20 But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. ... 25 And this is the promise that he made to us--eternal life. ... 27 But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie--just as it has taught you, abide in him.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ESV - 21 And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, 22 and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

John 14:26 ESV - 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Q4

1 John 2:18-19, 22 ESV - 18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. ... 22 Who is the liar but he

who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3 ESV - 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

2 John 1:7 ESV - 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Q5

1 John 2:24-25, 27 ESV - 24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he made to us--eternal life. ... 27 But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie--just as it has taught you, abide in him.

Prayers Con't: _____