

# Have You Been Seduced?

*1 John 2:24-29*

*With Study Questions*

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## 1 John 2:24-29

Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. <sup>25</sup> And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. <sup>26</sup> These things I have written to you concerning those who *try to deceive you*. <sup>27</sup> But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him. <sup>28</sup> And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. <sup>29</sup> If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him (1 John 2:24-29).

### What's At Stake?

I Went to a pastor's meeting this week and we were asked to discuss our outward conflicts and inward fears based upon 2 Corinthians 7:5. I seldom think along these lines, but upon some reflection I came to realize that one of my biggest internal conflicts revolves around the persevering faith of those under my care as a pastor and elder and father. Is my leadership producing, by the grace of God, those who fight "**the good fight**" who will "**finish the race**" keep "**the faith**" (2 Timothy 4:7).

Before John calls his readers to action, he presents that which hangs in the balance. This we see in verse 25 with the words, "**And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.**" It is John's desire that those under his care would be confident and unashamed before the presence of their Savior (verse 28.) So the initial question must be asked, "How can we be secure in knowing that we are recipients of the precious promise of eternal life?"

### The Seducers

We learn from verse 26 that there were people (somehow associated with the church) who were trying to “**deceive**” or “**seduce**” (KJV) *planoton* “to cause to wander off, mislead” the flock. These types of people have been and, to a certain extent, will always be a thorn in the flesh of the church.

History has produced a never-ending flood of cults, sects, para-church organizations and assorted anti-Christian dissenters that being, as Calvin states, “...**not content with Christ, they have had a hankering to wander beyond the simple doctrine of the gospel.**”<sup>1</sup> It is for this reason that John writes and that we study; to avoid being seduced. But seduced from what? From the pure doctrine of Christ.

John writes to keep the church free from something which would rob those who considers themselves to be part of the covenant community from their final destination. In this John does not deny the perseverance of the saints (that is, that genuine salvation is truly eternal and cannot become forfeit) but counts on it as we shall soon see.

So how can we be secure in knowing that we are recipients of the precious promise of eternal life? John tells his readers,

**Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father (1 John 2:24).**

### **Abide In What You Heard, Abide In Christ**

Let us first point out that there is no separating the knowledge of the person and work of Christ from being in Christ. It has been said, “**They in whom God’s truth remains, remain in God.**”<sup>2</sup> “**What you heard from the beginning**” are the facts of the faith—the truth about Jesus.

Christians should and will grow in their proper understanding of Jesus. In this small epistle John has already addressed the doctrines of the incarnation and propitiation. Of course we realize that merely understanding the concepts of the incarnation and propitiation does not save a person. And being confused about theological concepts

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<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries, Volume XXII, 1 John* (Baker Book House, reprinted 1993), p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries, Volume XXII, 1 John* (Baker Book House, reprinted 1993), p. 198.

doesn't mean someone isn't saved. But one who understands, but rejects these concepts, is most certainly still in darkness. As we shall soon see, John fully expects the truly saved reader to embrace the doctrines he has taught as obviously true.

It is a difficult, yet necessary, thing from time to time to depart from what we have once been taught. It has been aptly put that if we were **“unwilling to depart from that doctrine which we have once embraced, whatever it may be, this would not be perseverance, but perverse obstinacy.”**<sup>3</sup> What we must realize is that what John's readers learned from the beginning was declared to them from John himself (1 John 1:3.)

We must understand John's word to mean the message delivered by apostolic authority. Study, wisdom, humility, prayer and a willingness to be instructed must be exercised. Then be perseveringly inflexible to the extent that you have come understand the timeless truths of Scripture.

**But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him” (1 John 2:27).**

### **What It Can't Mean**

What does it mean that you don't need **“anyone to teach you”**? I believe the anointing can be equated to the teaching and embracing of Christ by His Spirit. This is something John assumes of true believers. Surely apart from this, John's words would fall on deaf ears. It must be understood that when John says that you don't need that anyone teach you, it cannot mean what it seems to mean at first glance, for why would John even be writing the letter and why would God provide teachers.

### **False Teachers, New Teaching**

A couple of things John might mean here: As Kistemaker states, **“The believers have no need of deceivers who try to teach**

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<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries, Volume XXII, 1 John* (Baker Book House, reprinted 1993), p. 198.

**false doctrine.”**<sup>4</sup> Certainly they don’t need that. John also may be implying that the former knowledge they had been taught through the apostles and embraced by the anointing of the Spirit was sufficient as we see John doesn’t present hitherto unknown doctrines in his epistle. In short, here John is encouraging his readers to continue in the faith they were first taught—a faith which has been the consistent theme of scripture since the very beginning, even Genesis.

**And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him” (1 John 2:28, 29).**

### **How Christians Behave**

John presents a simple condition and a logical conclusion. The condition is knowing that God is righteous. The conclusion is that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him. It might be more easily understood if put, “Everyone who is born of God does good.” The point here, as John has and will continue to make, is that any understanding of the Christian faith which teaches that a concerted effort toward righteous living is unnecessary is simply not the teaching of scripture.

It is with paternal affection that John encourages his readers as “little children” to “abide in Him” *menete*—to stay, remain in Christ. If we are found in Christ, we can have confidence and not be ashamed at His coming—whether He comes at the end of the age, or comes to take us home.

### Questions for Study

1. What is John’s desire for his readers according to verses 25 and 28?

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<sup>4</sup> Simon J. Kistemaker, *James, Epistles of John, Peter and Jude*, (Baker Books, 1987), p. 285.

2. With what type of teachers will the church always contend?
3. What are some ways you see the modern church being seduced?
4. How can believers know they are the recipients of the precious promise of eternal life?
5. Can you separate the knowledge of Christ from being in Christ? Explain.
6. Is something right simply because you have been taught it from the beginning?
7. How do you know if something is right?
8. Do Christians need teachers?
9. Can Jesus be Savior and not Lord?