

St George's, Paris : Bible Study #4

How important is theology? : I John 2.18-27

A perennial temptation is to divorce Christian teaching from Christian living. 'We don't want more theology, just more about Jesus' comes the cry! But what can we learn about Jesus apart from an understanding of who he is and what he has accomplished? Apart from Christ what is there to Christianity?

Group Discussion: What false views about Jesus Christ are popular today?

Personal Reflection: In what way have you been (or might you be) influenced by false teachers?

In these verses John provides a sharp contrast between true believers and false teachers (vv. 18-21) and gives a fundamental test to distinguish between the two (vv. 22-23). Most importantly he establishes that the way to combat error is to continue in the truth (vv. 24-28)

Read I John 2.18-27

1. What characteristics of false teachers and their teaching is John exposing in these verses?
2. Are there any factors that could make this kind of teaching appealing to you?
3. All the New Testament authors viewed the first coming of Christ as the event that marked the beginning of the end – 'the last hour'. What are some of the signs of the last hour (vv. 18-19)?
4. What does John tell us about the relationship between our presence in the church our perseverance in the faith (v.19)?
5. Truth is the most effective defence against an onslaught of error. What is the 'anointing' that gives us such knowledge of the truth (vv.20-21; also v.27)?
6. To deny that 'Jesus is the Christ' (v.22) is to deny that the man Jesus is the eternal, divine Christ – the God-man. Why is John so harsh toward those who believe and teach such a view (vv.22-23)?
7. Why is remaining in the truth so important in the Christian life (vv. 24-25)?
8. Obviously John is not suggesting that all human teachers are unnecessary (v.27) or else he would not have written this epistle. In light of the problem he is addressing, what is he saying?
9. How does his instruction (v.27) help us to understand what it means to remain in Christ?
10. What actions or attitudes help (or would help) you to remain in Christ?

Ask God to continue to fill your heart and mind with the truth about his Son.

Now or later...

What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit's ministry of preserving us from error?
What does it teach about our responsibility of persevering in the truth?