

Introduction

- Some get excited and get out their maps and guides when we mention the Antichrist. Most immediately think of Revelation and a single person.
- Present age and the age to come. The time between Christ's first and second coming. It wasn't revealed to NT authors that this present age would last thousands of years. We shouldn't get bogged down with times and calendars but understand how to live for an eternal kingdom no matter how much time we have left.
- True Living, True loving, and true thinking (belief). John here is not teaching about end times but how to endure to the end well and protect ourselves from wrong thinking

Be alert.

- **how much do you need to know to be saved?**
 - We know that salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit and not something we have to earn or buy. Salvation is not of works, but we aren't brought into the Kingdom and to new life ignorantly.
 - In this church in Ephesus wrong thinking about Christ was dividing them. We know that if you believe the wrong thing about who Christ is (His deity, His humanity, His sacrifice) then we do believe that puts you into the category of NOT saved. What we believe and profess does matter

- the Gospel message does necessarily believe that Christ was born of a virgin and of the Holy Spirit. That Jesus did live a sinless life (not saved at his baptism for example). That He did die on the Cross as a substitute for sinners and that He did come back to life on the third day. When we miss these points then we are believing in something other than Jesus Christ found in the Scriptures.

- **Can a true christian fall away?**

- The book of 1 John was written so that we would believe in Jesus and have assurance of our salvation. We believe that true christian cannot lose their salvation. "If they could lose their salvation they would" Spurgeon.

- John is teaching that some are close to the Gospel, hearing the Good News, apart of the church community yet far from God because they weren't actually saved. They are believing the wrong thing about who Christ is and showing they aren't really of us.

- Can you think in an honest and humble way about some who maybe made a decision long ago during a Revival service but yet spent the next 35 years not living like a changed person and like Christ is the most important person in the World to them? Sadly this is an example of someone that is proving to not be of us and their "conversion" disingenuous. The compassionate and loving thing for us to do is to call them to repentance and to Christ not to pretend like everything is fine. Fire insurance isn't in the Bible.

Abide in the Truth.

- **Don't be deceived.**

- "Catch me if you can" - real life person on which the movie and book were based now lives on Daniel Island of all places.

- FBI studies the real money, the real \$100 bill vs studying all the fakes and counterfeits out there. It is better to know the touch, smell, look of the real \$100 bill so that when a fake passes in front of them they instantly know its fake.

- many new thoughts or new ideas, emotional music, or modern doctrinal ideas may seem spiritual but aren't the authentic thing and the only way to know the difference is to study the real thing, the Bible, and abide so much in that truth that you know its taste, smell, and look from a mile away.

- Return to the Word. Guard yourself from Gnosticism, emotionalism, or progressive distortions.

- **How are you growing right now?**

- What is the Lord teaching and stretching you? What goals do you have to seriously grow in maturity the rest of this year because sanctification won't happen by accident

Purify yourselves as you wait

- Signs of assurance of salvation. Fruit of the Spirit. Fruit of righteousness.
- Hebrews 12:1-2 - - The hope of seeing Christ purifies us. Hope in Christ promotes holiness now. Treasuring Jesus above all things is the Spiritual fuel for avoiding sin and laying aside every weight.
- **Lay aside every sin** - Somewhat obvious as well the consequences for breaking God's law. Christian we are called to flee sin and temptation no play with it or consider it light. Just adding in practical steps of accountability, while of some value, will not ultimately solve the heart issue. That is a spiritual work and requires us to fight with spiritual tools. When we sin even for just a moment we are saying that either this pleasure is better than waiting on Jesus or maybe Jesus doesn't really care about this one; both are false.
- **Lay aside every weight** - morally neutral things in this world can keep you from faithfully enduring til the end and from growing in maturity.
 - Following sports and competition is not necessarily a sin issue. Nowhere in Scripture did it say to not watch Football this Fall. However it can be one of those things that ties up our legs and keeps us from running the race til the end. Some things in our lives keep us from growing but we don't get rid of them because they don't taste like sin.
 - Dallas Cowboys fan that knew more stats and player info for the last 20 years but struggled to read his Bible daily.

Let us wait with endurance. Lets wait for the day when there will be no more sin or death or sickness. Let us do things that stir our affections for Jesus vs stir our hearts for this world.