

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

The Second Divine Test of Fellowship

I John 2:18-27

1 Several years ago when I was a pastor of a small church, I received a letter from a couple who attended worship with our congregation occasionally. It contained a scathing rebuke of me and our church.

They had decided that our church was Satanic for several reasons: we had celebrations on holidays and birthdays, saluted state and national flags, sang the National Anthem and encouraged military service. The list of “sins” continued on for several paragraphs.

A couple of months earlier they had been visited by a religious group who volunteered to teach a Bible study in their home. They agreed to the weekly sessions. These sessions presented several doctrines contrary to the teachings and values of our church. This precious family had been indoctrinated into a cult! 2

Remember **the first divine test of fellowship in the message from First John, chapter 2, verses 7 through 17 **was love?****

But is love enough? If that were true, then it wouldn't matter what you believed or committed yourself to. Everyone in a sect or cult would be your brother. Cults practice love for one another pretty well. 3

There are at least four characteristics of a cult. 4

1. They have left the Christian faith even though they may still consider themselves Christians. 5

2. They reject the deity of Christ. 6

3. They recognize only themselves as Christians. So they attempt to evangelize everybody else. They must teach traditional Christians the errors of our ways. 7

4. They recognize other "revelations" besides the Bible and often adhere to them in preference to the Bible. 8

So, the second divine test of fellowship is commitment to the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ!

This concept is presented in First John, chapter 2, verses 18 through 27.

Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.¹ 10

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist — he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.² 11

¹ | John 2:18-19.

² | John 2:20-23.

See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us — even eternal life. ³ 12

I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit — just as it has taught you, remain in him. ⁴ 13

³ | John 2:24-25.

⁴ | John 2:26-27.

I. What Do You Mean When You Say, “Jesus is the Christ”?

What do you mean when you say, “Jesus is the Christ”? ¹⁴

When you make the Good Confession. “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God”, ⁵ what do you mean? ¹⁵

The Old Testament name, Messiah, ⁶ and the New Testament name, Christ, ⁷ both mean “anointed”. The anointed are individuals who are ceremonially rubbed with oil and, thus, set aside for a divine purpose! ¹⁶

Who were the anointed ones in the Bible? ¹⁷

Prophets were anointed to speak for God. First Kings, chapter 19, verse 6, **Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.** ¹⁸

⁵ Matthew 16:16 - Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

⁶ מָשִׁיחַ.

⁷ Χριστός.

Priests were anointed to mediate between men and God. Exodus, chapter 40, verse 15, **Anoint them just as you anointed their father, so they may serve me as priests.** 19

Kings were anointed to rule for God. First Samuel, chapter 9, verses 15 and 16, **Now the day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed this to Samuel: “About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him leader over my people Israel; he will deliver my people from the hand of the Philistines.** 20

Jesus became the final anointed prophet/priest/king. 21

In Acts, chapter 2, Peter convinced the people to become Christians when he said, **Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.** ⁸ 22

⁸ Acts 2:36.

In Acts, chapter 17, Paul told the Thessalonians, **This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.**⁹ ²³

What this means is Lord Jesus was set apart to function these ways! ²⁴

He was to function as the Prophet. John, chapter 7, verse 40, **On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the prophet”.** If He is the Prophet, you need to follow His teachings! ²⁵

He was to function as the Priest. Hebrews, chapter 5, verse 6, **And he says in another place, “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”**¹⁰ If He is the Priest, you need to approach Him as the only mediator between you and the Father in heaven! ²⁶

He was to function as the King. First Timothy, chapter 6, verses 14 and 15, **To keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . the King of kings and Lord of lords.** ²⁷

⁹ Acts 17:3.

¹⁰ See also Psalm 110:4 - The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Romans, chapter 10, verse 9 also says, **That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the death, you will be saved.** If He is the King, you need to obey Him completely! ²⁸

The next point this scripture makes is . . .

II. Church People Can Be Either True Christians or Antichrists!

Church people can be either true Christians or antichrists! ²⁹

Both true Christians and antichrists claim to be Christians. ³⁰

John, chapter 14, verse 6 tells us that the only way to the Father and eternal life in heaven, is to commit your life to Jesus. ¹¹ ³¹ But not all professing Christians are true Christians because Matthew, chapter 7, verse 21 says, **Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will**

¹¹ John 14:6 - Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ³²

So, how can I recognize the difference between a true Christian and an antichrist? ³³

True Christians remain in the revealed truth once and for all delivered to the saints! ¹² ³⁴

Now, to our scripture today.

Verse 24, See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.

Verse 27, As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit — just as it has taught you, remain in him. ³⁵

But antichrists do not! Verse 19, They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us;

¹² Jude 3.

but their going showed that none of them belonged to **US**. 36

True Christians are the ones who actually have the knowledge.

Verse 20 and 21, **But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth.** Christians are the ones who know the real truth, **all things**, because we remain true to the Bible only! 37

But antichrists deny the truth and lead you astray. Verse 22, **Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist — he denies the Father and the Son.** Again, in verse 26, **I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.** 38

True Christians are the ones who proclaim the Good Confession. 39

Notice verses 22 and 23, **Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist — he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.** True Christians confess the Son. Antichrists deny that Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One! ⁴⁰

What are the consequences of remaining true to the Good Confession? ⁴¹

Verse 23 tells us, **No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.** By confessing the Son you have the Father as well! But by denying the Son you can't have a relationship with the Father! ⁴²

Lord Jesus emphatically put it this way, **I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.** From now on, you do know him and have seen him. ⁴³

So, only true Christians have the promise of eternal life! Verse 25, **And this is what he promised us — even eternal life.** 44

You must be careful never to make a test of fellowship out of something not found in God's Word! But you must also be sure that you recognize those things which God's Word does make a test of fellowship. That way you will not be led astray by the Antichrists!

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