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Youth E.D.G.E. Sunday School
Back to the Basics: A Study of I John - Part VII

Know the Difference!
I John 2:18-27

It's dangerous when you can't tell the difference between two things that are remarkably different! That's the burden of John in this particular passage. He has just warned the followers of Jesus regarding the allure of worldliness, and now he puts forth a doctrinal test that helps us to distinguish heretics from true followers of Jesus. For the sake of your spiritual health, you must know the difference!

I. For the sake of your spiritual health, you must avoid those who are false professors.

John's main concern in launching into this portion of the text is the rise of opponents of the Christian faith that need to be exposed for who they really are. Antichrists exist who would seek to destroy the church of Christ

What do these false professors look like?

A. False professors lack faithfulness to the body of Christ (v. 19).

These are those who enter the church in order to sabotage it, and then take off, taking some of the flock with them.

B. False professors spread confusion about the person of Christ (v. 22).

We have seen references to the behavior of the secessionists, but this is the first specific reference to their doctrine. They deny the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. False professors deceive people who love Christ (v. 26).

These people aren't content to rush into error alone. They would like to bring as many people as possible with them.

II. For the sake of your spiritual health, you must identify with those who are true followers of Jesus.

It is not enough just to mark and avoid the antichrists. You must mark and identify with those who truly do follow after Jesus.

So what do these people look like?

A. Those who belong to Jesus accept the faith (vv. 20, 21, 27).

These followers of Jesus possess a knowledge and an anointing that the secessionists only dreamed of --- the true knowledge of who Jesus really is!

B. Those who belong to Jesus stay faithful (vv. 24-25).

True Christians will persevere in the faith. No cheap conversions. No shallow statements of dedication. True followers of Jesus will remain faithful until the end.