

The Holy Spirit in the Epistle of John

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches on the purpose and message of the epistle of 1 John, emphasizing the importance of the anointing believers receive from the Holy Spirit, which enables them to discern truth and error. The anointing signifies the believer's participation in the work of Christ as prophets, priests, and kings, received at conversion as a gift from God. Gaebelein highlights the significance of the Spirit's presence in believers as evidence of Christ abiding in them, and warns against false teachings that diminish the glory of Jesus Christ, using historical examples to illustrate the subtlety of such errors.

Description

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Transcript

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 hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "Arno Clemens Gaebelein explores the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers as presented in the Epistle of John, emphasizing the anointing and its implications for understanding truth and spiritual authority." sermonType: "expository" topics: - name: "Holy Spirit" slug: "holy-spirit" - name: "False Teachings" slug: "false-teachings" bibleRefs: - text: "1 John 2:20" bookId: "1JN" chapter: "2" verse: "20" - text: "1 John 3:24 - 4:1" bookId: "1JN" chapter: "3" verse: "24" - text: "1 John 5:6" bookId: "1JN" chapter: "5" verse: "6" outline: - heading: "I" points: - "Purpose of the Epistle" - "Understanding the Anointing" - "The Role of the Holy Spirit" - heading: "II" points: - "The Anointing in Believers" - "Distinction Between Physical and Spiritual Anointing" - "The Anointing as a Family Gift" - heading: "III" points: - "The Evidence of the Spirit's Presence" - "Testing the Spirits" - "The Spirit of Truth" - heading: "IV" points: - "The Importance of Knowing the Truth" - "The Role of the Spirit in Understanding Scripture" - "The Witness of the Spirit" - heading: "V" points: - "The Anointing and Believer's Authority" - "Common Misinterpretations of Anointing" - "The Anointing as Empowerment for Service" faq: - q: "What is the main purpose of the Epistle of John?" a: "The main purpose is to convey the message of eternal life and the manifestation of that life in believers." - q: "How does the Holy Spirit relate to believers according

to John?" a: "Believers receive an anointing from the Holy Spirit, which enables them to know the truth and understand Scripture." - q: "What does the term 'anointing' signify in this context?" a: "The term 'anointing' signifies the presence of the Holy Spirit in believers, empowering them for their spiritual roles." - q: "How can believers test the spirits?" a: "Believers can test the spirits by examining whether they affirm the full glory of the Lord Jesus Christ." - q: "What is the significance of the anointing for young believers?" a: "The anointing is a gift given to all believers, regardless of their spiritual maturity, enabling them to discern truth." quotes: - "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you." - "The presence of the Spirit of God in the child of God is the evidence that Christ is in us." - "The true test is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ." applicationPoints: - "Recognize the Holy Spirit's presence in your life as a source of truth and guidance." - "Test teachings and doctrines against the person of Jesus Christ to discern their validity." - "Embrace the anointing as a family gift that empowers you for service in the body of Christ." keywords: - "Holy Spirit" - "anointing" - "believers" - "truth" - "spiritual gifts" - "testing spirits" - "epistle of John" - "family of God" ---

THE purpose and message of this epistle, which has rightly been called "a family letter," are stated in the following passages: Chapter 1:1-3, 1:4, 5:13. The great truth which is developed by the Spirit of God is not so much the life which the believer has in Christ, that is, the eternal life imparted unto him, as it is that life which is in the believer in its manifestation, corresponding to the life which the Lord Jesus lived on earth. John does not speak in his inspired writings of believers as "Sons of God" but as children. The Greek word means "born ones." We become members of the family of God by the new birth.

1 John 2:20-27

Chapter 2:20-27. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in Him." The Holy Spirit is not mentioned by name, but He is the unction and believers possess this anointing of which John speaks. The Greek word for anointing is the word "chrisma". The same word is used in Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27, 10:38 and Heb. 1:9, and in each case it is applied to the Lord Jesus as the anointed One. In 2 Cor. 1:21 it is used as here of the believer. The word employed in James 5:14 "anointing the sick with oil" is the word aleipho, and it is always used to denote a physical anointing; the following passages use this word: Matt. 6:17; Mark 6:13, 16:1; Luke 7:38, 46; John 11:2, 12:3. It seems to prove that the anointing with oil in James 5:14, so misinterpreted in our times, does not mean a spiritual anointing but a physical anointing for the benefit of the suffering of the body. Who ever has invented the practice of the present day "divine healers" of taking a drop of oil and putting that drop on the forehead, calling it "anointing" must have been ignorant of the meaning of this word.

The anointing, or unction, which John mentions in this passage comes with the gift of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart of the believer is the anointing the believer has. Prophets, priests and kings were in the old dispensation anointed with oil. Our Lord was anointed with the Holy Spirit, because He is the Prophet, the Priest and the King. We also mention the outcast leper and the ceremonial appointed in the Old Testament for his cleansing. In his unclean and vile condition he is the type of the sinner. He was cleansed by blood and anointed with oil, the emblem of the Spirit of God.

Like the Lord Jesus, the believer is anointed with the Holy Spirit, to share in His work. In conversion, having been cleansed by the blood of the Son of God, we are anointed by the Spirit, having received Him, and therefore the believer can act as a prophet, as one who tells forth the story of redeeming love, sent

into the world even as He was sent into the world. This anointing constitutes the believer a priest, to exercise a holy priesthood in offering up spiritual sacrifices (I Peter 2.5). The same anointing is ours in view of the coming glory when we shall reign with Him as kings.

Here again we meet the perversion of the truth, for some teach that this anointing is the portion of only a small number of Christians, who have sought this unction in a special experience. This experience is generally called by some unscriptural term, or identical with the baptism of the Spirit. The context teaches something different. It will be noticed that the apostle John, in speaking of the anointing, addresses not the fathers in Christ, those of riper experience, who have walked in the truth for years, nor does he address the "young men," those spiritually so, but he addresses the very youngest in the truth, the "little children," those who were but recently brought into the family by the new birth. The anointing by the Spirit is therefore the gift of God to the feeblest believer, to the youngest in the truth; it is a family gift and comes along with the new birth. This anointing, the indwelling Spirit, may be called the instinct of the new nature. By it the believer knows what is of the truth and what is not. The anointing abides in us that we may know the truth and understand the Scriptures. We give an illustration.

It has happened to us a number of times that young Christians appealed to us for help in connection with certain books they had bought and had begun to study. One wrote as follows: "Some person came to my home and showed me certain helps for Bible study. The person said the proceeds were to be used in missionary work and therefore urged me to make a purchase. As I looked through them I found many Scripture references and here and there saw something about the coming of the Lord. As they were cheap I purchased them. But I must tell you after having read a good many pages I am really afraid to go on in the study of these volumes. A heavy feeling comes upon me, I if something is wrong and a voice seems to warn me against these books." Then the writer informed us that the books were by a pastor, Charles T. Russell, and published by the "International Bible Students Association," that evil cult which denies the essential and eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ along with other denials of fundamental truths. The writer said she was young in the faith and could not detect error but felt that something was wrong. This illustrates the anointing and what it does for the child of God.

1 John 3:24; 4:13

Chapter 3:24; 4:13. "And hereby we know He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us. The presence of the Spirit of God in the child of God is the evidence that Christ is in us and abides in us.

1 John 4:1-2

Chapter 4:1-2. How do we know the Spirit of God in the midst of the many spirits, which come under the guise of being the Spirit of God? The spirits are to be tried (tested) for many false prophets are gone out into the world. The true test is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Anything which denies the full glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, which in any way detracts from His glory, emanates from the spirit of anti-christ. It may be a small matter in the eyes of man, which is unscripturally taught concerning the person of Christ, but that small thing will finally show itself as an error which leads to the denial of Christ. Over a hundred years ago a movement was in existence in England which claimed to be another Pentecost, just like the movements of our times. The leader, Edward Irving, put great stress upon the incarnation, that Christ is come in the flesh, and other doctrines which are true. But the power in that movement suggested that Christ might have sinned and then the demons brought forth the evil doctrine of the peccability of our Lord, that He had a corrupt nature, that sin was in Him. Such is the subtlety of the serpent.

1 John 5:6-8

Chapter 5:6-8. We must omit the seventh verse, as the oldest manuscripts do not contain it and it is generally agreed that the verse is an interpolation. [Note: We disagree with AC Gaebelein in the statement. 1 John 5:7 is not an interpolation...see other resources posted which attest to 1 John 5:7, for example Vindication of 1 John 5:7]. In verses 6 and 8 the Holy Spirit is mentioned as the Spirit of Truth who bears witness. Christ came by water and blood, the water stands for cleansing, the blood for expiation, and therefore the Spirit is here; by Him we are enabled to appreciate and to rest in the value of the water and the blood, as it came from His side, and know the blessed power of both.

The second and third epistles of John, being private letters, do not mention the Holy Spirit.

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