

# (1 John #16) Undergirding the Faith of the God-Fearing

by J. Glyn Owen

---

*The anointing of the Spirit and the truth are both necessary for Christian living, and the anointing gives us the ability to know and understand the truth.*

**Duration:** 35:48

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:17, Matthew 6:33, John 14:26, John 16:13, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 John 2:20, 1 John 2:27

**Topics:** "Fearing God"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of holding onto the truth of God's word and not being swayed by false teachings or novel ideas. He encourages the early Christians to rely on the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the word of truth. The speaker highlights the universality of this truth, particularly in times of distress, danger, and heresy. He urges the listeners to not just hear the truth, but to let it abide in them and have a deep impact on their lives.

---

## Transcript

Now I would like to turn to the passage of Scripture that was read for us by Mr. Lowe a little earlier on, in 1 John, chapter 2, verses 18 to 29. We turn to this passage for the third time. John is here, you will remember, applying the third of his tests to those who are somewhat heretical, to say the least.

They have left the fellowship of the Christian church, and John is eager that the Christians should know their spiritual status and standing. And so he has been referring to certain tests that may, and indeed ought to be applied in such a situation. He began in this rather large passage, he began here by sharing with the readers of his letter his understanding of the times.

It's very late, says John, it's the last hour. Then he proceeded to unmask these awkward people who have left the Christian church and brought into existence an opposition. He is unmasking them and he designates them as antichrists.

You mustn't play with these people, says John, you mustn't toy with them. You must have no fellowship with these. These are not Christians that have gone wrong, these are enemies of the Christ.

They have the spirit of the great antichrist who will come in the very last time. And because of that, you must be very careful, they are antichrists. And now before he leaves this passage and completes the

application of this third test, the test of truth, the test of belief, he comes to undergird the faith of the faithful.

And that's what we're going to look at today. And there are two main things that are brought together here, two main threads, two main truths. The first is this, John reminds the Christians of their relation to the Holy Spirit.

And the second, he reminds them of the fact that they have in their possession the word of God. Now how very simple, and how very familiar, but how unutterably important. No man in a pulpit can say anything more important to his people today than this.

If you're a Christian, you have been anointed of the Holy One, the Holy Spirit. And if you're a Christian, you have in your possession God's own truth. So that by the anointing of the Spirit which you have, and the truth of the word which you possess, you have the capacity and you have the resources to fight on all hands against Christians who would have an influence upon you that would slacken your spiritual pace, or against heretics who have opened up another show down the street and who are opposing some of the main tenets of your Christian faith.

With the Spirit of God within you and the word of God that you know, says, John, you don't need anything else. Now that's my message this morning. May the Lord help us to extract it from here as briefly as we can.

First of all, the apostle reminds them of their relation to the Spirit of God. Now let me read verses 20 and 27. But you, says John, have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all know.

Come back to that in a moment. Then verse 27, the anointing which you receive from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you, as His anointing teaches you everything, and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you, abide in Him. Now fundamentally what John is doing at this point is this.

He's reminding his first readers of the time when they became Christian. Whatever language you use to describe becoming a Christian for the moment, that's what John is getting at. The time when they came to Christ and the response of that was this, they were anointed with the Holy Spirit.

We don't use this language very ordinarily, but this is biblical. You see, Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Messiah means the Anointed One.

We read in Acts chapter 10 and verse 38 that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He is the Anointed One. We read in the epistle to the Hebrews that God did not give the Spirit to Him by measure.

Now you put those two statements together, God anointed Him, and not with measure, without measure. No man has been filled with the Spirit as Jesus was. Let's take that in for a moment.

No man has known the fullness of the Spirit perpetually and abidingly as Jesus did. Now, when you become a Christian you come to Christ. Not only do you come to believe on Him, but you come to be incorporated into Him as a branch into the vine.

That's His own beautiful picture. Now what happens? What happens is this. As the branch is incorporated into the vine, to change the metaphor, the sap of the vine penetrates and percolates the branch.

It is endued. It is anointed. It shares, to change the metaphor again, in the anointing of the head.

The head of the body is anointed beyond measure. When you become a Christian, you share in the anointing of the anointed. So that if any man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of His.

You're not a branch of the vine. You're not a member of the body of which Christ is the head unless you yourself have been anointed. It is part and parcel of the experience of becoming a Christian.

Now that is basic to what John is saying here. You, he says, have been anointed. In other words, if you come really to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, the Messiah has breathed His Spirit into your heart, you have the anointing.

That's the fundamental. That's the base. Now arising out of that, and this is almost as important, John speaks, first of all, of the universality of that.

He stresses it. Now he stresses it because of the circumstances. In times of distress, in times of problems, in times of danger, in times of heresy, when some young Christians are trying to stand on their two feet, spiritually and morally, countering this influence and that influence.

You know the tendency, don't you? Oh, I feel so weak. I need something extra. And this is the time when young Christians tend to look for something which they say they haven't got.

And the tendency at this point is to look for this experience or that experience. And John knew that. Now look, he says, You have been anointed by the Holy One, and notice, and you all know certain things.

I want to underline that word, all. Some of the translations, unfortunately, put it the other way around. They say, like the King James, and you know all things.

Now that's not what John said. No Christian knows everything. No one is omniscient, only God.

You don't know everything. I don't know everything. I'm sure I don't.

There is no man, there is no woman, there is no Christian, however mature in our church this morning, who knows everything. John didn't say that. What he did say is this.

There are certain things that every Christian knows because of the anointing. And basic to that, of course, is the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. When Simon Peter acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah in Caesarea Philippi, Jesus counted, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father which is in heaven.

He knew. And every Christian knows that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. You know, you all know.

You all know certain things just because of this. But now, equally important is this, the perpetuity of that. Look at verse 27.

The anointing which you received, says John, abides in you. You see, some of these young Christians might say, yes, yes, I know, I know, John, I know, I did receive something. And I was so different.

And it was very wonderful whilst it lasted, but I don't any longer have the same kind of feeling. I'm not living on that same plane consciously at any rate. But now, says John, all right.

I want you to know, he says, that the anointing which you received from him abides in you. My good friend, you and I need this every day of our lives. We need to be reminded of this.

The Holy Spirit that the Father and the Son have sent as the paraclete to the church abides in the hearts of his people. Jesus said that, you remember him promising the Spirit to his disciples. I will pray the Father, he says, and he will give you another counselor or another comforter to be with you forever.

Forever. Even the Spirit of truth. That is John 14 and verse 16.

You see, it was so different with the incarnation of the Son of God. He came down to earth for a period, then to leave, to ascend, to go back, as he said, to my Father, to return. But, says Jesus, the Spirit, the other paraclete who's coming to take my place, when he comes, he will abide with you forever.

Now, my good friend, you and I need this this morning, as much as the readers of John's epistle in the first place. You need to know that the Spirit of God who's come into your heart, the anointing which you've received, is with you forever. Oh, many things may have happened to make you cold, to make you doubt.

You've almost thrown in the sponge as far as within you, as far as you yourself are concerned. But, says John, he is still there. And then we come to the crux of the matter.

What is the ministry that he performs? You have no need, says John, that anyone should teach you, as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie. Now, let's get hold of this. By his anointing, the Holy Spirit teaches Christ's people everything they need to know.

You don't need that anyone should teach you. Now, you've got to take that in its context. Some people would make John contradict himself here.

Actually, John is teaching them in writing, so they do need teachers. The Apostle Paul says that the Holy Spirit endows some people with a gift of teaching. What then did John mean? What he means is this, of course.

Take it in its context. You see how these heretics have gone out from the church. Some of them were very clever people.

Heretics generally are. They generally are. In all the cults, you will find geniuses.

Judged according to the level of the flesh and of natural ability, you will find great men in all the cults that are worth talking about. But now, if they've gone out then from a community of Christian men, the Christians might feel, well, if they've gone and if they believe other things, how are we going to cope without them, some of the more knowing and the more clever ones? And don't forget, the word gnostic means knowledge. They claim to have great knowledge.

They could always talk about their knowledge. So what is the church going to do without these people? Now, says John, it's all right. You don't need anyone from outside.

You don't need any heretic to teach you in Christian things. You as a Christian community, you are self-contained. You don't need the liberal of the world.

You don't need the man from outside. You don't need the heretics. You don't need any of them.

So, he had the anointing. And the anointing will give you teachers. And the anointing will give you disciples, men and women who are prepared to be taught.

You have to have the two, of course. Some churches have teachers, but they haven't got listeners who are willing to be taught. They have men with itching ears.

They listen, but they will not be taught. Some people have listeners, but they have no teachers. John says, you're a listening people.

You're willing to be taught now. He says, you don't need to worry that these folk have gone out. The Holy Spirit, the anointing, will teach you all things you need to know.

You're self-contained because you have the Father and the Son and the Spirit and the Word. My good friends, this is something for us to know. I look at some of you this morning, and you've left little Christian communities, perhaps in distant parts of the world, I think, for some of our missionaries.

Isn't this a very precious truth? If we have the anointing of the Spirit, then He is able to give the gifts that are necessary for the building up of the saints until we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, Ephesians 4, unto a perfect man. I will build my church, says Jesus. We don't depend upon men who are cultured according to this world.

God supplies the anointing and the need of His people. Now that's the first thing. John reminds them of their relation to the Holy Spirit.

And I trust that you and I don't need any further application of that this morning. Christian, look into your heart. Though you and I may have grieved Him many a time, He is still there.

Maybe this morning, honor Him and look to Him to guide us and to teach us and to perfect in us what God by His grace has begun. That's the first thing. The second is this.

I don't know what's happened this morning, but the clock's gone all haywire. However, here we are. The second is this.

And after the annual meeting, I'm trying to be brief, as you notice, but I've got to hurry. I'm under law these days, not under grace. Well, now, a little bit of law may do us good.

What is the second main strand of truth woven here? Well, it's this. The apostle reminds them of their possession and knowledge of God's truth. Now, if I were to stop at this point, it would be the most dishonorable thing to the God of the Word and the Word of God.

It is not all the truth to say to Christians you have the anointing of the Spirit. It is true. But John says you need something else as well as the Spirit.

My, that sounds like heresy. You know, it isn't. It's Christianity.

You have the anointing. You have the Spirit. He says, well, all right, full stop.

We don't need any more. Wait a minute, says John. You do.

Now, what's he saying? Let me read three verses, 21, 24, and 25. I write to you, he says, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it and know that no lie is of the truth. Then we come.

Let what you have heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you have heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he has promised us eternal life.

How can I summarize that? Along with the anointing of his Spirit, God has given his redeemed people his truth. His truth. Now, by that, John means fundamentally the truth as it was revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ and taught to the twelve apostles, who in turn passed it on to the churches.

But as a matter of fact, that truth includes Jesus Christ's view of the Old Testament. So many things that he taught were based upon the Old Testament. And he said, I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but I've come to fulfill.

So that as a matter of fact, when John is speaking here of the truth, though he is thinking first and foremost of what they heard from the beginning from the apostles, that included a view of the Old Testament. So that it all may be summed up in terms of what you and I have in our Old Testament and our New. We are not wrong if we equate the truth with what is incorporated into the Old Testament Scriptures and the New Testament Scriptures.

Jesus Christ taught the truth. He was the personification of the truth. And yet in prayer to his father he said, thy word is truth.

There's the word of Scripture and the word which he himself was and taught. All these wrapped up into one bundle comprise the truth. Right.

Now will you please notice a principle here before we attempt to address ourselves to the details. And it's a very important principle. We've hinted at it.

The Holy Spirit could, if he so chose, do everything for us directly as individuals without the Bible. What I'm saying is that if he chose, he could. You see, he communicated truth to Moses and he communicated truth to the prophets and they were able to write it down.

Now, if he chose, he could do exactly the same thing with every Christian. If he chose, I underline that. He could call every Christian individually and say, look, you don't need a Bible but I'll talk to you and I'll reveal to you my truth.

He could if he chose. Do you notice that's not the way that the Holy Spirit has chosen. What he has chosen to do, his method is this.

Not to communicate truth to every Christian in the church directly as he did to Moses and the prophets and the apostles. But he has brought into existence a body of truth. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

So that here we have an objective point of reference. The Word, the truth. Not a hunch that we may have within us, but the objective truth.

And the Spirit's method is this. It's to anoint us with the ability to know and to understand and to believe and to obey the truth. But the truth is in the Word.

You will know why I get a little bit edgy when I hear Christians talk an awful lot about, say, the Lord told me. The Spirit said to me. Now, I know we can do that.

But if I hear a Christian talk consistently on that level, as if the Lord was communicating with them just as he did with Moses, just as he did with the prophets, giving them some new revelation, ah, there's something unwholesome there. That's not his method. His method is he's given us the truth.

And by the endowment of the Spirit, he tells us to search the Scriptures. And he tells us that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. So that our business is to employ the anointing and its gifts to search the truth.

Of course, you can't be lazy if you're a Christian. Because searching the truth of God is not a lazy business. It'll get you up early and it may keep you down late.

See, it's so much easier to say, look, I'm having an experience of the Spirit and then I know what's right. It always leads men astray if it's diversified from the truth of the Word. This is the objective point of reference.

We are not dependent, then, upon a subjective experience of the Spirit, precious as that is in itself. And my good friends, there is nothing more wonderful than the peace of the Spirit in your heart. And the joy of the Spirit in your soul.

And the fruit of the Spirit in your life. And the gifts of the Spirit that he imparts. Please, please don't let's be misunderstood.

But the Spirit has brought the Bible to birth as he brought Jesus to birth. And the Word is the sword of the Spirit. When the Spirit is working to deal with sin and Satan in your life and mine, he takes hold of the Word and he uses it like a sword.

That's his weapon. Oh, this is most important. Now, you have the endowment, he says, and you know the truth.

Very well, then, what about the heretics? You can face them all. There's no reason why you should cringe. There's no reason why you should fear.

You have it. Two or three words, very simply, very briefly. John reminds these early Christians that they have both the subjective prerequisite and the objective essential.

The anointing of the Spirit and its influence within. The word of truth and its guidance outside. John assures them that they know God's truth.

And he's able to do that for this reason. He had received the truth from Jesus Christ himself. You remember how this epistle started? It's a remarkable beginning to an epistle.

That which was from the beginning. Which we have seen with our eyes, which we've touched with our hands and have handled, he says. Oh, we knew him, the word, the life itself was manifested.

And we were with him and we touched him and we handled him and we listened to him. And we're committing and talking and giving over to you what we heard and received from him. He knew the truth.

As it was embodied in Jesus, as it was given by Jesus. Now, John knew that these Christians had received the truth. He knew that what they believed was consistent with that.

It wasn't anything new. There are always innovators in the church. Do be careful when you see somebody coming into the church.

He wants to change everything. Now, some things need changing from time to time. But you find some people, they want to change everything.

They're just plain innovators. Sometimes it's because they've lost the sense of the Spirit's anointing. Sometimes it's because they've lost a sense of truth.

And they want to change things. You know, it's like children wanting something new all the time. Give them a nice toy to play with, and the little kid, he wants a little toy, something quite inexpensive maybe, but something different.

There's that about many Christian people. Give them different toys every Sunday, different toys for every day of the week, and they'll dance and they'll enjoy it. But the stale diet that God has provided for His people in and throughout this world, they cock up their noses at.

Now, this is sad. It says, John, I write to you not because you do not know the truth, because you know the truth. So don't think of leaving the truth because the heretics have gone out.

Don't think of entertaining some novel ideas just because these clever people have got novel ideas. I tell you, he says, you not only know the truth, but you know that there is no lie of the truth. God's truth is self-consistent, and anything that is contrary to it is a lie.

Then this, John announces what they must do with the truth, which they know and which they have, if they are to mature as Christians and to overcome in the world. And he puts it very simply. To have the truth is not enough.

They must know its contents, and then they must even go beyond that. How does John put it? Well, he puts it like this in verse 24. Let what you have heard from the beginning abide in you.

Truth, first of all, requires access. Don't we know what this is? Someone was confessing to me recently that he long listened to the preaching of the gospel, and it was always a battle. As he listened, he said, I was always trying to keep it at arm's length.

I wonder whether there's someone here this morning in that category. You're prepared to listen, but you've got your armor on, and you say to the truth of the word of God, all right, I like listening to you, but don't come under the skin. You must receive the word, it must gain access, get right in, into the mind, into the heart, into the soul, into the depths.

Then, says John, it must abide. It must abide there, stay there. That is, it must not be harassed, it must not be overridden.

It must not be frustrated by ideas that are alien to it. You mustn't allow any philosophy to come in, or any idea to come in that would try to dislodge the truth. Keep them out, says John.

Let it abide in you. And I suppose a good translation of that word abide is to be at home in you. Paul says the same thing when he prays for the Ephesians who are already Christians, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

But Christ is in. What do you mean, Paul, when you say that Christ may dwell? What he means is that he may be at home there. He may be free.

Let there be no one trying to dislodge him or upset him. Let him be at home in your heart. Let the word of God rule in your heart.

Let it abide. Now, notice this. As it abides, it becomes active.

Now, this is what proves the word of God to be the truth. Let it abide in your soul, and it will become active in this sense. It will always lead you to a greater knowledge of God the Father through God the Son.

It will always lead you into battle with sin and battle with Satan, but will always keep you in fellowship with the Father and with the Son. If what you heard from the beginning, says John, abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and the Father. You have come to know the Lord Jesus in all his greatness and glory, and coming to know the Son, as such, you will know the Father.

Can you see how the Christian experience is self-authenticating? Having the Holy Spirit's endowment within, having the truths of God in our hearts, now, by the Spirit, we must let the word which we have received abide. And as it abides, it acts. How does it act, says someone? Well, the psalmist will tell you that.

Thy word, he says, have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. I've hidden it within. I've got it in my soul, in my subconscious, says the psalmist, even if not in my conscious thought.

It's there, and I find that when sin comes, it somehow rises up a standard of rebellion. Do you know that? Jesus did in the desert. When Satan came three times over, do you remember, he said, it is written, it is written.

What is that? But the word hidden in the heart, rising up a standard of rebellion against evil. The word abiding in him. Paul speaks about the same thing in Colossians.

Let the word of Christ, he says, dwell in you richly. As you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, let it dwell in you, because as it dwells, it will become active. And in so doing, we enjoy what he has promised us, as John says, eternal life.

And this is what he has promised us, eternal life. Now, as this goes on, says John, what you will discover is this, that the life of the ages, which in fullness you can only have when you go to be with the Lord, and are out of this body, but you already have it. And though living here upon earth, you have the life of heaven in all its expansiveness, and in all its glory and its wonder, you have it right here and now in the soul.

In other words, you're exploring eternal life. And what about the heretics? And what happens is this, you become less conscious of them, and more conscious of Him. Hallelujah.

My dear Christians, can you see the clarity of the Apostle's thought? You have the anointing, believer. Are you a Christian? If you're not a Christian, then I bid you turn from your sin this morning and come to the

Saviour. Let Him be your Lord, let Him be your Master, let Him give you the life of the ages in your soul, let Him save you today.

You'll share His anointing. With His anointing in your heart, and the truth in your mind, and in your possession, you have the key to a life of victory over all. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gifts.

Yes, in the plural, even though they're one. For the word of truth is the fruit and the gift of the Spirit. Let us pray.

Father, Thou knowest how similar or dissimilar our experience may be from that of these ancient Christians addressed by the Apostle long ago. We ask of Thee that the relevance of that word written by the Apostle to them may be unquestionably appreciated by us, so that in our day, in our age, whatever happens round and about us, we may know that we have, in the Spirit and in the Word, all that we need. For they bring us to an ever-deepening knowledge of Thy Son and of Thyself, and thereby to an ever-deepening experience of the everlasting life which Thou hast given us in Thy Son.

Oh, lead us by the way, we pray, to Thine everlasting glory. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4817.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-glyn-owen/1-john-16-undergirding-the-faith-of-the-god-fearing/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**