

How Our Joy Can Be Full - Part 4

by Zac Poonen

John's writing is a call to abide in Christ, avoid deception, and live a life of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 9:09

Scripture: Romans 14:17, 2 Timothy 4:3, 1 John 2:1-4

Topics: "End Times", "Spiritual Deception"

Description

John the Apostle, a 95-year-old man, urges believers to abide in Christ and have confidence in His imminent return. He warns against the spirit of deception, the Antichrist, and the importance of discerning teachings contrary to Christ. John emphasizes the urgency of the last hour and the presence of both a main Antichrist and many smaller deceivers. He highlights the need for believers to remain steadfast in the face of worldly temptations and false teachings, focusing on love, holiness, and obedience to God's commandments.

Transcript

Behaved in the church meetings on Sundays. Little children, abide in Him. This is John the Apostle speaking, 95-year-old man.

Forget for a moment who's standing here and think of John the Apostle standing here, white-haired 95-year-old man saying, little children, abide in Christ. He is coming. Have confidence when He comes.

Don't be among those who will shrink away in shame because they did not live for the things He lived for. He also speaks about the Antichrist in verse 18. That's the spirit of deception.

See, what is the Antichrist? You know what anti means. Anti means against or opposite. If people do something which is the opposite of what Christ did, we could say that is the Antichrist.

Now, that could be a big measure of it or a small measure of it. That's different. But anything that's opposite to the spirit of Christ, that's how I see the Antichrist.

In chapter 2 verse 18, he's speaking about saying, children, it is the last hour. Think of that. In 95 AD, 1900 years ago, it was already the last hour.

The clock had already come to 11 p.m. If it was 11 p.m. in AD 95, where do you think we are today? I think we are past 11 59. We're pretty close to the end. The seconds are ticking away.

It's like a person watching when midnight is going to come. It's past 11 59 now. Do you believe that? I believe it.

Jesus said, behold, I come quickly. Come, Lord Jesus. It is the last hour.

And just as you heard that one main Antichrist is going to come in the last days. Yeah, that John believes. But there are many little Antichrists that have already appeared.

From this we know that it is the last hour. That is what we saw in verse 26, those who deceive you. That means they teach the opposite of what Christ taught.

Anyone who's teaching the opposite of what Christ taught is the Antichrist. Now, you wouldn't think of Antichrist having a Bible, would you? Well, if he didn't have a Bible, he wouldn't be able to deceive you. If he came with some other holy book of some other religion, he wouldn't be able to deceive you as a Christian.

To deceive a Christian, the deceiver will need a Bible. And you need to believe what you believe. You need to have a sheep's clothing.

And it says here that they were with us once upon a time. That means these Antichrists were sitting in the church. Verse 19, and they went out from us after some time, because they didn't really belong to us.

How did they go out? They went out because the Apostle John preached so strongly that these guys could not survive in that church. They came thinking that they could get some power in that church, but John the Apostle would thunder away. Jesus called him a son of thunder, and he would thunder away with his message.

And little by little, these fellows who didn't want to repent dropped out and went away. Some people repented and probably became a part of that church, but the others who didn't repent went away. And he says these Antichrists sat here, but they went away.

They tried to take over this church, but they couldn't. And that's why it's a great need in our day for shepherds to watch the flock, to be able to say like Paul, I watched over you that no wolf came in sight as long as I was here. So he says they went out from us because if they had been of us, they would have remained with us.

They would have accepted the message of eternal life and fellowship, but they wanted something else. Demas left Paul because he loved this present world, and he says they went out so that it can be seen that they did not belong to us. And he says when you look at them today, I'm talking about first century, think of these people who sat in churches where John was preaching.

Imagine, I would never want to leave a church where the Apostle John was preaching. Why would I want to leave that? The greatest man of God living on earth preaching in that church, why would I want to leave that? With those powerful anointed messages to leave that for what? People would leave because their sin is being exposed by this man. This man does not allow them to be worldly.

This man will not allow those women to dress immodestly and come to his church. They want to do that. They want to dress up like the actresses on the theater.

John says go. And the men who wanted to pursue after money and make a name for them said John says go, you can't survive here. And that's why they left.

That was more, those earthly things were more important to them than what John preached, eternal life and fellowship. John spoke about loving one another. He said if you can't love your brother, you sit here and you gossip and backbite against others, you're a liar.

You don't love God at all because you don't love your brother. Would you backbite against somebody you love? Do you backbite against your daughter or your son? No, because you love them. Why do you backbite and gossip about somebody else? Because you don't love them.

And John says if you don't love them, you don't love God. He says that in 1 John 4 19. You're a liar.

You're not a believer. You're a liar. Imagine sitting listening to this type of preaching and people get offended and say John, you know, he's such a hard preacher.

I like those nice preachers like Demas and all. I'd like to go and listen to him. John says go.

There are hundreds of Demas. Go and listen to them. They've also planted churches and their churches are much bigger than mine, John says.

Go and join them. But if you sit here, John would say you're going to listen to eternal life and holiness. You've got to love one another.

You've got to forgive others. You've got to keep God's commandments. So those are the type of things people didn't want to hear and so they went out from us.

And John says there you have an anointing, verse 20. You've got the Holy Spirit and you know. What are some of the things that John preached about? I want to turn first of all to chapter 2 verse 1. You know this is the whole purpose is that our joy may be full.

Remember that's a test of whether you got the kingdom of God. Righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. And if you got the message that John is trying to preach, your joy will be full.

And anybody here whose joy is not full, listen to what John is preaching because your joy can be full. First of all, why is John writing chapter 2 verse 1? You know it's I'm glad that he writes these little sentences. He says my children this is why I'm writing this letter.

Okay number one. Chapter 2 verse 1. My little children. Everybody there was like a child compared to this 95 year old John.

I'm writing these things to you first of all so that you may not sin. Where do you hear that message today? You hear a man getting up and saying I'm preaching so that you fellows who listen to me don't sin in your life. That's not the message you hear.

It's not the message you hear on television. It's not the message that you hear in many pulpits. What you hear there is oh you're so insecure.

God loves you. It's true God loves you but he loves you so much that he hates those wretched sins in your life. I can't say I love my child if I don't do anything about all the sicknesses in his body.

What would you think of a mother who's got a child with so many sicknesses? So I love my child. I love my child but I won't ever take him to a doctor. I won't ever give him any medicine.

I say you're a liar. You don't love your child. Oh I feed him.

I clothe him. What's the use feeding him and clothing him? He's sick. He needs treatment.

That's what John is saying. Don't be fooled by all these people who say God loves you. You're so insecure.

I want to tell you that God loves you. That's psychology. You're insecure because you're living in sin.

You need to turn. God has a right over your life. He purchased you.

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