

Discerning and Persevering I John 2:18-27

This morning we are going to learn two important character qualities that are true of every genuine believer as a result of salvation – Every true believer in Jesus Christ as a result of salvation is discerning and every believer is persevering. Believers know the foundational truths of salvation and believers remain trusting in those truths over the course of their lives.

What is biblical discernment? Tim Challies, “Spiritual discernment is the God-given, Spirit-empowered ability to understand and interpret truth, so that we can apply truth to our lives, thus bringing glory to God and furthering our enjoyment of Him.”

1. The Truth These Believers Knew – I John 2:21

- *In the last days there is going to be deception and there is going to be defection*
 - a. Deception – I John 2:18
 - Antichrist - The coming final world ruler energized by Satan who will seek to replace
 - We know he is coming because many antichrist’s have already come
 - b. Defection – I John 2:19
 - Someone who defects from the faith was never a part of the faith to begin with
 - Why are true believers secure in their salvation?
 - I John 2:20 – The Holy Spirit guards us from error and guides us into truth and Ephesians 1:13-14 says we are sealed with the Holy Spirit
 - Preservation of the Saints - the believer continues to face temptations and difficulties after conversion, and God preserves him, so that his faith does not fail (Jude 24-25)

2. The Error These Believers Faced – I John 2:26

- The error these believers faced was a Christological error
 - a. False teachers denied that the human Jesus was the heavenly Christ
“The antichrist’s taught that Jesus was born and died as a man, and that “the Christ,” by which they meant a divine emanation, was within Him only during his public ministry, descending upon him at his baptism and leaving him before the cross. They denied that Jesus was or is the Christ or the Son. They made him a mere man who for a brief period was invested with divine powers, but they denied that the man Jesus and the eternal Son were and are the same person, possessing two perfect natures, human and divine. In a word, they denied the incarnation.”
 - b. False teachers denied the equality of God the Father and God the Son
 - John 10:30, “I and the Father are one.”
 - Both the full humanity and full deity of Jesus must be equally maintained by the teacher who is to be considered genuinely of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit testifies to the true nature of the Son, while Satan and his forces distort and deny that true nature

