

## Advancing in the Midst of Adversity # 7

1 John 2: 24-29

Take a moment to consider the great challenges John spoke of in our last study. He warned the spirit of antichrist was already among us, seeking to undermine the church and hinder her ministry. He reminds us that we are living in the last time, a time where society and humanity are not receptive to the Lord or supportive of the church.

This last time in which we live can be a daunting hour. We face increased opposition from the adversary through the world around us. The influence of the church has waned from what she used to enjoy. Skeptics and critics abound. It can be an overwhelming task if we approach it solely within our own strength and ability.

John knew that, and he understood many would be tempted to drop out of the race or abandon the fight. He knew we all face a difficult struggle, but he was confident of our ability to overcome as well. He knew the Lord was greater than any opposition we faced and that He was more than able to equip us to endure.

Hindrances will remain, but we do not have to give in to defeat. We are more than conquerors through Christ. Knowing we are enabled of the Lord, let's consider the [attributes](#) we are to possess in Him as we think on: [Advancing in the Midst of Adversity](#).

**I. The Steadfastness of Believers** (24-25) – Many had dropped out, abandoning their faith, refusing to remain committed unto the Lord. John knew if we were to advance for the Lord, we must remain in the fight. This isn't easy, but it is certainly possible. Consider:

**A. The Command** (24a) – [Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning.](#)

Keep in mind the context of John's exhortation. Many appeared to be in Christ, but abandoned the church and denied the faith. They never experienced salvation in the Lord; there was never a genuine relationship. The believer is different. We have received truth in salvation. At that moment we were indwelt with the Spirit.

- We may grow weary, but we have no desire to abandon the body. In times of weakness and despair, we are to lay hold on the truth of the gospel. It is to dwell in us, abiding in our being. John declares truth has not and will not change. The same promises we received at salvation remain today. When we are tempted to abandon the race, lay hold on the truth in Christ!

**B. The Commitment** (24b) – *If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.* As long as we maintain truth, holding onto the work of Christ in us, we can remain committed to the Lord. In fact, our commitment will come as a byproduct of continual fellowship with Christ. As long as we remain in the truth, seeking the will and ways of God above the desires of the flesh and cares of the world, we will continue in Christ!

- Really this should come as no surprise. Many wander from the Lord when they lose the awe and wonder of their salvation. As long as we remain close to the Lord, maintaining an intimate relationship with Him, we will desire to serve Him. Our focus will be on the Lord rather than the hindrances of life. Our commitment hinges upon the quality of our relationship! *Col.2:6 – As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:*

**C. The Comfort** (25) – *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.* Is it any wonder the world behaves as it does, seemingly grasping at straws, jumping from one doctrine or philosophy to another? They are searching for something to bring peace, something to provide answers to the questions of life. The believer does not have to live that way. We do not have to worry about the difficulties we endure or the obstacles we face. Life will have its share of burdens, but we have the promise of eternal life in Christ our Lord.

- That ought to encourage and embolden us in the face of any difficulty or trial. We have no way of knowing what we will be called upon to endure. We have no way of knowing where the path of life will lead, but we do know how it will ultimately end. We are secure in Christ. The body we inhabit is just a tabernacle of flesh. It will one day be folded and laid aside. We will enter the presence of Christ our Lord and spend one eternal day with Him. In light of that, what could we possibly face that has the power or ability to defeat us?

**II. The Strength of Believers** (26-27) – Now John speaks of the strength we possess through the Lord. If we are to endure in this last time, strength will be necessary. Strength is available in:

**A. Our Awareness** (26) – *These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.* John sought to share as much about the tactics of the enemy and what believers can expect to encounter as he could. He wanted the church to be aware of the struggles present, being prepared to meet those struggles, instead of fleeing in fear and defeat. Biblical knowledge and godly wisdom serve us well.

- Much has changed since John penned this epistle and yet much remains the same. The struggles remain in much the same way as previous generations. We remain in the last time. If we

are to overcome, we need to know what the Bible teaches about this hour. We need to ensure we are clothed in spiritual armor, prepared for the battle. We need to understand the tactics of the enemy and the ways to combat his attacks. He is relentless, and the better equipped we are, the more likely we are to gain victory.

**B. Our Anointing** (27a) – *But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you:* John knew believers possessed a special resource the world did not have. All believers are indwelt with the Spirit. We have assurance that He will guide us in the journey. When the enemy comes against us, we have the Spirit's guidance to counter his attack.

- John reveals our anointing isn't given of the world, and we have no need to look to the world for counsel. The Spirit is given of the Lord and He will always lead us in ways that are consistent with the will of God. We can approach any situation, being led of the Spirit, in full confidence and expectation. *John 16:13 – Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.* *1 Cor.2:13 – Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

**C. Our Advantage** (27b) – *but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.* Not only do we enjoy the anointing of the Spirit, we also have the promise of His continual presence. We are surrounded by the Lord through the Spirit as we engage the enemy. We do not have to wonder if we have the resources necessary to overcome. The Spirit will guide us in the right path, while surrounding us with His presence and power. The world and those who come against us have nothing to compare to such protection. They are unable to defeat the presence and power of God! *Eph.1:13-14 – In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,* <sup>[14]</sup> *Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

**III. The Sanctity of Believers** (28-29) – The world and the enemy attack through sin, unrighteousness, and deception. We overcome through the Lord and our relationship with Him. The closer we are to Christ, the better equipped we are to endure. Consider:

**A. Our Challenge** (28a) – *And now, little children, abide in him.* Again we are challenged to abide in the Lord. This does not infer that we are in and out of salvation, but that we need to maintain a close relationship with Christ, living as free of sin and rebellion as possible.

- **Abide** means to “*dwell, continue, stay, rest in or upon.*” It carries the idea of “*being set and remaining there; remaining continually in a fixed state, condition, or being.*” Take a moment to consider those with whom we live. They know all about us. They know our tendencies and our weaknesses. There is little hidden from family. We are to abide in Christ in such a way that nothing would hinder our closeness with Him.

**B. Our Confidence** (28b) – *And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.* Keep in mind we are living in the last time. Many have abandoned the journey, denying the faith. Christ could come at any moment. When He comes, we will stand before Him in judgment. We will all give account of the lives we’ve lived. As long as we abide in Christ, living our lives according to His will in order to glorify Him, we can have confidence that we will not be ashamed when He returns.

- Possessing that confidence ought to be our desire. It challenges me though. If Christ were to come today, would He be pleased with what is revealed in our lives? We aren’t keeping anything from Him, but would we feel good about standing before the Lord at this moment, with our lives as they are? Abide in Him, and you will always enjoy that confidence!

**C. Our Character** (29) – *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.* We are reminded yet again that we are known by the fruit we bear. We know the Lord is righteous and holy, and those who follow His path and seek to live righteously reveal their new birth. In an age where so many profess Christ, this is the true test. What do our lives reveal? If there is never any fruit, if one’s life never resembles the Lord, there is likely no conversion.

- I want to live in such a way that there is absolutely no doubt. I want to honor the Lord with the life I live. I want fellow believers to know they can count on me while in the journey. The journey is tough and we need each other. Let’s live our lives to glorify the Lord, encourage believers, and be a witness to the lost!

**Conclusion:** There is no doubt we are living in the last time. We face much difficulty in everyday life. It is possible to advance even in the midst of adversity. We do not have to live in defeat and despair. We need to possess and portray the attributes John described in the text.

Are there needs in your life? Are you as close to the Lord as you ought to be? Have you met Christ in salvation? If not, I urge you to seek Him today!