

THE SERMON NOTEBOOK

Johnny L. Sanders, D.Min.

SUBJECT: THE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE

TITLE: THE ANOINTING

TEXT: 1 JOHN 2:20-23

INTRODUCTION. In verses 18 and 19, John paints a sobering, if not shocking picture of the work of antichrists within the church. In corporate America we often hear of hostile take-overs. Be assured that the antichrists within Christendom, within denominations, and within the local church are bent on a hostile take-over of the church. Quite literally, they are hell-bent on taking over the church, or to be more accurate, Satan, the prince of this world, is hell-bent on using them to take over the church.

The question we must ask is, how successful have they been? Where do we look for proof of hostile take-overs, and if they exist what can we do about them? Later, I will share some things from two books that speak of the shocking success of the antichrists in the church in America over the past century. But for many of us the battle is still raging. A number of years ago, I was attending a meeting a number of years ago in order to hear a very controversial speaker. Before the meeting a lady I had met earlier approached me and made the statement, "If Charles Stanley is reelected president of the Southern Baptist Convention it will destroy the Cooperative Program?" When I asked her how she could make a statement like that, she insisted that it was true because a former SBC leader had told her that. Charles Stanley was reelected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and sadly, many of those were defending the Cooperative Program organized a movement that siphons off money that would otherwise be going to missions through the Cooperative Program. The Cooperative Program was not killed by Charles Stanley, but even after some twenty years I recently heard an elderly lady try to explain challenges to the Cooperative Program with a reference to Charles Stanley. By the way, the lady who predicted the destruction of the Cooperative Program has never told me she was wrong. But, then, they never do.

The issue, however, is not just what has happened to churches and denominations, but what has happened - and is happening - on the individual level. Are church members being conformed to the image of Christ, or are they being conformed to the world? The antichrists, as we have seen in verses 18 and 19, are lost church members who would diminish either the deity or the humanity of Jesus Christ. If these people have their way they would take over the church by seducing Christians who are not grounded in sound doctrine.

I. TRUE BELIEVERS ARE CONTRASTED WITH THE ANTICHRISTS, 2:20-21.

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not

written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

A. “But You” Contrasts True Believers With False Believers.

1. “Conversion” implies a change.
2. “Repentance” demands a different walk.
 - a. You are either walking in the light or in darkness (1 John 1:7).
 - b. Believers do not walk with unbelievers.
 - c. Non-believers cannot walk in the light.
 - d. Believers cannot walk as they formerly walked.

B. True Believers Have an Anointing from “the Holy One.”

1. John did not say some of you have an anointing.
2. “You” means all true believes in Jesus Christ.
 - a. When you are saved you are indwelt by the Holy One.
 - b. We must be continually filled with the Holy One.

There are three occurrences of “anointing” (*chrisma*) in the New Testament. They are found here and in verse 27. This anointing refers to the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer (see also, John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). The word is translated “unction” in the KJV. The anointing, or unction is totally and completely the work of the Holy Spirit. No one is self-anointed, and no one can be anointed by another.

3. “The Holy One” is the Holy Spirit.
 - a. No lost person has ever been anointed by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. No one other than the Holy One has ever anointed anyone.

C. “You Know All Things” Because You Are Anointed By the Holy Spirit.

1. This does not encourage a know-it-all attitude.
2. This does not mean that you do not need to study to know truth (2 Tim. 2:15).
3. What it means is that you discern between truth and error because you have been anointed by the Holy Spirit.

D. Now, Let Us Look at Some Principles of This Anointing.

There is one thing we must understand, and I am afraid the modern church has done a very poor job in teaching members this. Let's face it, either we have failed them or "the Holy One" has failed them! Where do you think the blame lies?

It seems that too many see this anointing as some special experience which falls upon certain individuals who are particularly "blessed." Others see this as a supernatural experience which may happen to them at various times in response to their quest through especially intense prayer, fasting, or some other service. However - and we must understand this - when you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, you simultaneously receive God the Father as your Lord, and the Holy Spirit as the indwelling presence of God. You are miraculously, supernaturally indwelt once for all time by the Holy Spirit at the point of your salvation. Now, does that mean He is through with you at that point? Absolutely not! When you receive the Holy Spirit, He enters your life to empower you to walk in the light, to walk as Jesus walked, to walk with Jesus Christ in the spirit. He is your divine Guide and Teacher, calling to your remembrance Scripture He has stored up in your spirit to enable you to make the right decisions and to honor our Heavenly Father.

The goal and ministry of the Holy One in the life of the believer is to conform them to the image of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). One way He does that is to lead us to think the thoughts of Jesus - "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Your education was not a one time experience. Neither is your sanctification. You are sanctified supernaturally by the Holy Spirit as He is allowed to nurture and develop you day by day and moment by moment. We are being sanctified daily, continuously as you allow Him to do His work - at least this is His will and desire.

You are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the point of your salvation, but each believer needs to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. When I was in junior high at Sledge, Mississippi, I discovered a book in the school library. The title was, *God Is My Co-Pilot*, and it was written by Col. Robert A. Scott (later General Scott, as I recall). Perhaps you have seen those words on a bumper sticker. Well let me tell you something - God has never applied for the job as your Co-Pilot. What He desires is to be your Pilot - and, I might add, your Navigator. What this means is that you must keep on having this unction, or keep on being filled by the Holy Spirit.

Now, let us look at some of the things involved in this anointing.

1. Anointing denotes an appointment or commission.
2. You are anointed when you receive the Christ, the Anointed One.
3. You are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the time of your salvation.
 - a. You are indwelt once for all time by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. You receive all of the Holy Spirit you are ever going to receive at that time.

- c. Sanctification has to do with how much of you He has.
4. Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the point of his salvation.
 5. This anointing has the effect of ordaining us to the priesthood of believers.
 - a. In the Old Testament, Oil was placed on the head.
 - b. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is placed in the heart.
 6. Every believer is affected by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. You may be being filled daily with the Spirit.
 - b. You may be grieving the Holy Spirit through sin (Eph. 4:30).
 - c. You may be quenching the Spirit by not yielding to Him (1 Thes. 5:19).
- E. Look at Some of the Doctrinal Implications of the Anointing by the Holy One.
1. You keep on having this anointing from the point of your salvation.

We are not talking about “how I feel in my heart” at any particular time. My feelings change from time to time, often depending on the mood I am in at the time, but more often in response to my circumstances. There are a lot of spiritual quacks out there and they may deceive the young as well as the ignorant believer. They need to understand the work of the Holy Spirit in nurturing them. We are talking about the need for continuous filling by the One who indwells us.

2. This indwelling is a doctrinal fact.

“However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him” (Rom. 8:9).

“This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (Gal. 3:2-3).

3. The indwelling is called unction (anointing) in 1 John 2:20.
4. The indwelling is for all believers in the church age.
 - a. Jesus promised it in John 7:39.

“ But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

b. He promised believes the Holy Spirit in John 14:16.

“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever.”

5. The indwelling of the Spirit means that Jesus Christ is in the heart, Rev. 3:20; Rom. 8:10f.

6. The indwelling by the Holy Spirit is different from filling by the Holy Spirit.

a. The indwelling comes at the point of salvation (Gal. 4:6).

b. The filling is continuous (Eph. 5:18ff).

7. The purpose of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is given in Acts 1:8.

8. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38).

F. Consider the analogy to the anointing of the priest with oil

1. Oil lubricates - the Holy Spirit prevents friction.

2. Oil aids in healing - the Holy Spirit heals wounds.

3. Oil was a fuel for lamps - the Holy Spirit illuminates our hearts.

4. Oil generates power - the Holy Spirit empowers believers (Acts 1:8).

5. Oil adorns and grooms - the Holy Spirit makes believers more attractive.

II. JESUS CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY TO THE FATHER, 2:22-23.

“Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”

A. He Who Denies That Jesus Is the Christ Is a Liar.

1. The Jehovah’s Witness translation lies: Jesus is not “a god.”

2. The Mormons are wrong: He was never Lucifer’s brother.

3. The Muslims are lying: Jesus was not just a great prophet like Mohammed.
4. The atheist is lying: Jesus is the Son of God, manifested with power.
5. The New Agers are lying: the Jesus of the Bible is not the Jesus of New Age religions.
6. The liberals are lying: Jesus is not a way to God, He is the only way to God.

B. He Is Antichrist Who Denies the Father and the Son.

1. The antichrists of John's day were Gnostics who denied that Jesus came in the flesh.
2. They denied the relationship between the Father and the Son.
3. Antichrists are active in the church today.

One does not have to deny the existence of God, or of Jesus Christ to be an antichrist. All he has to do is to teach a false doctrine about the Father or the Son. That is happening all the time, and sadly much it is done in one church or another. Homosexuals are ordained to the ministry, homosexuals are united in marriage, and "popular" theologians quoted in the newspapers are pushing diversity - they are inclusive, not exclusive. They selectively quote Scripture to justify ungodly behavior. These modern antichrists are open to almost anything, except Jesus Christ.

Let me recommend two books Let me quote from the first chapter of the book, *The first, The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity*, by Leon J. Podles:

"Despite the constant complaints of feminists about the patriarchal tendencies of Christianity, men are largely absent from the Christian churches of the modern Western world. Women go to church; men go to football games. Lay men attend church activities because a wife, mother, or girlfriend has pressured them.

The strategy of American revivalists in the Second Great Awakening in the 1830s was to approach men through their wives: women were converted first, and then they exerted more or less successful pressure upon fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons to join them in the church" (p. 3).

Podles reveals just one of many evidences of a hostile take-over of churches and denominations in the last century and a half. The second book, *The Empty Church*, by Thomas C. Reeves (Free Press, 1996), is even more disturbing. The response of "mainline Protestant" leaders in America led Reeves to conclude that the old mainline churches had lost much of their influence by the 1990s:

"Indeed, an abundance of literature revealed that these once prominent and affluent denominations were declining and in disarray - ironically, at a time when religious

belief in America seemed to be extraordinarily high.”

Let me add an editorial here: religious belief in America was in the process of supplanting secular Humanism as a world-view. Gallup polls indicated a revival of faith in America. At first, church leaders thought the church was winning the battle against Humanism. Such was not the case. What was happening was that New Age (now Postmodern) religious movements were injecting the old humanists with something spiritual. Gallup asked, not do you believe in the God of the Bible, but, “do you believe in God, or a god-like force in the universe?” Many psychologists, sociologists, politicians, educators, and some religious leaders were ready for the change, and sadly, many Christian leaders interpreted the change as a genuine revival. Little did they realize that New Age religious philosophy would be harder to combat than a blatant atheistic, evolutionary humanism.

As Reeves continued his study of the old mainline churches, he finally asked the question: Do churches, well, really matter any more? His “mainline” churches consists of what he calls the “seven sisters” of American Protestantism: “the American Baptist Churches of the USA, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church” (p. 1). Now consider these quotes from Reeves, who grew up in the Lutheran church and then joined the Episcopal church, of which he says, “Since 1976, I have been involved in organized efforts to move the Episcopal Church in a direction it chooses not to go.” He is a trustee of an Episcopal seminary. The following quotes will underscore his concern for his denomination and others.

“The mainline churches have played major roles in the shaping of the United States. For centuries, membership was often a sign of respectability, prosperity, and upward mobility. (These churches) still lead other Christians in income, education, and property ownership.

And yet today, these one-time pillars of the religious establishment are frequently ignored, their power to bestow social prestige has greatly dissipated, and their defining theological doctrines have been largely forgotten. It has often been noted that mainline church membership sharply declined in recent decades. But in fact the strength of mainline churches has been eroding for the better part of (a century). Some observers have predicted their eventual demise. Even friends and insiders have acknowledged that the mainline churches have lost their impact, their zeal, even their meaning (p. 2).

We may learn much about what has been called the ‘cultural war’ by studying the deterioration of the religious bodies that once established spiritual and moral standards.

But there is more to this than current events. The critical issue, in my judgment, has deep roots in Christian history, so deep that it was addressed by St. Paul. Is there truth, supernaturally revealed in Christianity, that lies beyond our present

understanding of things, truth that is unchanging and absolutely vital to our present and future?

This is not about the acceptance or rejection of fundamentalism; for most Christians, certainly in the mainline churches, that struggle ended long ago. The issue involves the line that must be drawn, by all thinking Christians, between certain knowledge and revelation. What, in short, are the essentials of the religion without which it loses its authenticity and power? And what are the implications for personal conduct?"

Reeves stresses that, though he sees all these problems within his denomination, he is not about to become a Baptist or a Pentecostal. He likes the dignity of the rituals in his own church. We might help him if he would allow us to take him back to the time the mainline churches ended their "struggle" with regards to fundamentalism. Did they reject a fundamentalist movement within their churches, or did they reject the fundamentals of the faith? Now let me follow this with one quote from C. S. Lewis:

Advice from one devil to another on how to destroy a Christian's faith:

"Talk to him about 'moderation in all things.' If you can get him to the point of thinking that 'religion is all very well up to a point,' you can feel happy about his soul. A moderated religion is as good for us as no religion at all - and more amusing."

C. He Who Acknowledges the Son Has the Father Also.

1. We are saved by the Triune God: Father, Son, and Spirit.
2. Those who know the Son know the Father.
 - a. Only those who know the Son know the Father.
 - b. There are not many ways to the Father.
 - c. Everyone is not going to Heaven.
 - d. Most people will reject Jesus Christ, and spend eternity in Hell.
3. Jesus saves, and Jesus alone (Acts 4:12).

CONCLUSION. Let John conclude this message for us: *"Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also."*

INVITATION

