



## NG Study Guide: 1Jn. 2.24-29 “Live Truth” 4.8.18

### Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. *Leader note: Please review the brief instructions for leaders at the bottom.*

### The Study

**Thesis:** Those who learn God’s word *and* apply it to their lives will experience life transformation, and will have assurance of their relationship with God and eternal life. The Apostle John has described several tests to know whether you are truly saved: obey commands, eliminate sin, spiritual growth, love God not the world, and here, love and live the truth about God.

#### A. Knowing truth about God [right thinking] [24-27]

*<sup>24</sup> Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. <sup>25</sup> And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. <sup>26</sup> These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. <sup>27</sup> But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.*

*Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning [24]* refers back to the warning against false teachers and doctrine [18-23], and the encouragement to remain in the truth about God. It is the idea of remaining faithful to what they were taught [NLT]. In essence, continue in the sound doctrine of Jesus and the New Testament writers. You are encouraged to let the truth about God *abide in you* [24]. To abide means to remain or dwell with and we will see John use the term six times in verses 24-29. If you are seeking God, the Bible is where you discover how to have a real relationship with the Father and Son [24]. Read the Bible to understand God, to see God revealed, and to hear from Him. The Bible reveals the truth about God.

Jesus told Pilate that He had come into the world to bear witness to the truth, and that Pilate replied, "What is truth?" [Jn. 18:37-38]. It appears from the context that Pilate's tone was cynical rather than inquisitive. And your attitude, like Pilate's, will determine your experience with eternal life. Are you seeking or cynical?

**The Bible reveals God's greatest promise - eternal life [25].** All humans are eternal beings in the sense that we have a soul that will live forever despite the passing of the body. Thus, eternal life is not a reference to duration of life, but a description of the nature or quality of life. Eternal life is the description of the essence of spiritual life with God that can be enjoyed in part on this earth, and can be experienced fully for eternity in heaven. The Scriptures give us this hope [Rom.15:4].

John is writing, throughout this letter, so that we may know that we have eternal life [5:13]. The word *abide* is repeatedly used by John to reveal the nature of real life with God: abide in Christ and live as He lived [2:6], abide in light and love others [2:10], abide in the word and experience spiritual life and growth [2:14], abide forever by doing the will of God and following Jesus [2:17], abide in the word continuously [2:24], abide in Jesus [2:28]. To abide means to remain, dwell, or be connected.

The truth about God or sound doctrine protects you from deception [26-27]. John wrote this letter to warn and protect against false teachers and doctrine that deceive and keep people from Christ and eternal life with God. Since the greatest promise is eternal life, the greatest deception is that there is no eternal life, or that you can attain it apart from Christ. Both result in missing eternity with God in Paradise and eternal torment in judgment for rejecting God's gracious gift of eternal life through Christ. Paul warned that in the last days before Christ's return that people would be deceived by false teachers who tell them what they want to hear, rather than the truth, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables" [2Tim. 4:3-4].

The Holy Spirit protects from deception [27]. True believers, or followers of Christ, won't be deceived because they have the anointing or the Holy Spirit in them. The Holy Spirit guides you in the truth about God [27, 2:20]. The Gnostics were prevalent false teachers in John's day, and taught that only they had a special anointing, and they had special knowledge beyond the word of God, and thus sought to replace the Holy Spirit. But John refutes that false doctrine by noting that there is no teaching apart from the Bible that will enlighten you about God, and it is ultimately only the Holy Spirit that can enlighten you about God. The ability to teach the Bible is a gift of God to equip and build-up believers [Eph. 4:11, Rom. 12:6-7], but apart from the work of the Holy Spirit it is futile for teacher and disciple. If you have received the Holy Spirit you will recognize genuine as well as false doctrine, grow in Christ, and abide or remain in Him.

**There are three major forms of spiritual deception in our culture:**

**Spirituality apart from the biblical truth:** New Age spirituality promotes universalism the idea that all people go to heaven. Promotes the idea that Jesus didn't come to declare his own divinity, but to proclaim man's divinity. This spirituality urges the idea that there is no sin, need for a Savior, and that all is love, God is love, and we are all God. The mantra is moral diversity and tolerance of all beliefs (apparently except belief in the Bible and the gospel). The problem with this kind of spirituality is that unlike the Bible, there is no rational or reasoned basis to support its validity.

**Secularism:** rejects all faith and belief in the spiritual realm. Like materialism, it holds that nothing exists beyond the material world. In this worldview, the pursuit of pleasure or your happiness is the highest good and proper aim of life (hedonism). Secularism provides no meaningful answers to deal with suffering which is part of the human condition, and no hope beyond this life.

**Syncretism:** is the attempted amalgamation of different religions or philosophies. For example, trying to combine worship of Jesus and Mother Earth. Syncretism neglects the obvious logical issue that if two competing worldviews are in conflict they both can't be correct.

**2. Applying truth about God [right living] [28-29]**

*<sup>28</sup> And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. <sup>29</sup> If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.*

Staying connected with Jesus produces right living so that you will be ready for His return [28]. Jesus' Second Coming is just as sure as His First Coming. Jesus' delay is not because He is lazy, but to give as many as possible the opportunity to repent and receive eternal life, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" [2Pet. 3:9]. Jesus foretold that His return would be at an unexpected time, and thus we are to live in anticipation of His return [Matt. 25:13]. *Since you know that He is righteous [29] or all virtuous, you prove your relationship with God by your right living - everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him [29].*

Those who are experiencing eternal life not only want to know truth about God (right thinking), but the Holy Spirit provides a new nature and power to apply the truth about God and engage in right living so that you follow Jesus, and keep His commands.

### Study Guide Qs

***Q1. When you contemplate eternal life, what are some of your thoughts and feelings?***

***Q2. What are some of God's promises that are especially comforting to you in this season of life?***

***Q3. What are some ways that other religions or philosophies offer eternal life apart from Jesus and His gospel?***

***Q4. The awareness that Jesus will soon come for His Church, or we will go to be with Him, motivates right living. What is one area of your life that you would like to see transformed in this season?***

**"Digging Deeper" (optional or alternative study)**

1. Search: syncretism, secularism, and spirituality apart from Jesus. In what ways are these worldviews influencing the culture around you?

2. Research the “Rapture” and “The Second Coming” <https://www.gotquestions.org/difference-Rapture-Second-Coming.html>. What did you discover and how does it make you feel?

**Love your neighbor *outside* the group better:**

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors where they live, work, study, or play this past week?
2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor outside the group?
3. Here is a neighboring idea(s) for us to consider for the week(s) ahead:

**Take time this week to get to know a co-worker or fellow-student over a cup of coffee or lunch.**

**Love your neighbor *inside* the group better:**

1. Are there some needs in our group that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor within the group?
2. What might we do about that need to help?

**Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:**

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don't force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

**Leader Notes:**

1. **Seek to involve as many group participants as possible.** A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.
2. **Feel free to pre-select the discussion questions that you want to focus on** in case there isn't enough time to answer them all.

**3. The “Digging Deeper” section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities.** As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the “Digging Deeper” section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.

**4. Every time you meet consider asking:**

**a. What about this passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing?** If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don’t hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.