



YOUR
SEDUCTION
TECHNIQUE
IS
RUBBISH

SEDUCTION = LEADING THE CONGREGATION AWAY FROM THE TRUTH

Lesson 2: 1 John

Note: 1 John shows no signs that the church to which it was written was being persecuted...BUT...Temptation to go back to their "old ways" of thinking and yielding to the enticing words of worldly individuals was making its way back into "the church."

- The peril...and the hardships was not persecution....but seduction. Seduction...came from within.
 - ✓ The trouble which 1 John seeks to combat came not from people who were out to destroy the Christian faith but from those who thought they were improving it.
 - ✓ It came from people whose aim was to make Christianity intellectually respectable (secular philosophy and contemporary thought sermons).
 - ✓ It came from people that stood in the pulpit and stated.... "To get the people to think like we think we must accept some of their thoughts....but steer them to a higher thought by loving them just the way they are, with all the baggage they carry, and bring them to our way of thinking when they know that they don't have to give up their lifestyles to be 'one of us'.....":
- Scripture tells us opposite:
Jesus said, "Many false teachers prophets and teachers will arise, and lead many astray." Matthew 24:11
Paul said, "I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them." Acts 20:29-30.

One of these groups was the Gnostics:

Gnosticism = basic belief...only spirit was good and that is all that matters; the material world was essentially evil.

This belief is the conviction that the one real aim in life is to liberate the human spirit from the vile prison house of the body.

They believed:

- **Any real incarnation is impossible.**
- **Jesus was not human...He was only spirit.**

Docetism = taught that Jesus only seemed to have a body
(Jesus was purely spiritual and had nothing but the appearance of having a body).

Gnosticism...Gnostic belief had certain practical consequences in the lives of those who held it.

1. The Gnostic attitude to matter and all created things produced a certain attitude to the body and the things to do with the body.

There were 3 different attitudes:

- **It might take on the form of self-denial** (fasting, celibacy and rigid control), even ill treatment of the body. The idea that celibacy is better than marriage and sex is sinful.
- **It might take the form of assertion that the body did not matter and that, therefore, its appetites might be satisfied without restraint.** Since the body was in any event evil, it made no difference what was done with it.

There were even people that believed that it was highly knowledgeable and relevant to know the best and the worst of life...they must enter into every experience of life at its highest or deepest level...

In this context, they believed that it was the highest level of knowledge to know every kind of sin.

John countered this with... “God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5).

- **It might take the form of pure spiritual state...and that these people have reached spiritual perfection (Separating them from the rest of the world).** They felt themselves as “above and beyond sin.”

2. Destroyed fellowship between the Christian believers:

This belief divided the people into two (2) classes:

1. Those who were capable of a really spiritual life,
2. Those who were incapable of a really spiritual life.

The Gnostics produced a spiritual “aristocracy” who looked with contempt and even hated on lesser mortals.

The Gnostic heretic:

- ✓ They talked of being born of God, of walking in the light, of having no sin, of dwelling in God, of knowing God.
- ✓ They had no intention of destroying the Church and the faith; their intentions were to cleanse the Church of dead wood and make

Christianity an intellectually respectable philosophy, fit to stand beside the great systems of the day.

The false teachers: They had been within the Church, but they had withdrawn from it.

1 John 2:19, "They went out from us, but they did not belong to us." They were people of influence, for they claimed to be prophets. Although they had left the Church, they still tried to disseminate their teaching within it and to deceive its members and lead them away from the true faith (1 John 2:26)

The questions we must ask ourselves:

- **Do we want to live like the world...or live a life that is pleasing to the Father?**
- **When confronted with evil, do we want to stand firm against it?**

The main objective of John's writing 1 John is twofold:

1. *That the joy of his people may be completed (1 John 1:4)*
2. *That they may not sin (1 John 2:1)*

However attractive the wrong way may be, it is not in its nature to bring happiness.

To bring joy and to preserve them from sin are one and the same thing.

John's Idea of God:

1. *God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all (1:5)*
2. *God is love, and that made Him love us before we loved Him, and made Him send His Son as a remedy for our sins (4:7-10, 16)*

John's conviction is that God is self-revealing and self-giving.

To give an account of John's true belief...and his direction and conviction by and through the God that he knows...is found in the following passage:

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth."

John's Idea of Jesus:

Because the main attack of the false teachers was on the person of Christ, this letter, which is concerned to answer them, is especially rich and helpful in what it has to say about Him.

1. **Jesus is the one who was from the beginning (1.1, 2:14)**
When we are confronted with Jesus, we are confronted with the eternal.
2. **Jesus is the Son of God (4:15, 5:5)...must be convinced of this. That the relationship of Jesus to God is unique (none like it)..**

3. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah (2:22; 5:1)

- To say that Jesus is from the beginning and that He is the Son of God is to preserve His connection with eternity....
- To say that He is the Messiah is to preserve His connection with history (God's plan at work through His chosen people, was moving...God's creative work in bloom).

4. Jesus was most truly human. *"I touched him with my own hands" John said. (1:1-3) No writer in the New Testament holds with greater intensity the full reality of the incarnation than this simple apostle who loved the Lord Jesus.*

It was by water and blood that He came (5:6)

He laid down his life for us (3:16)

5. The coming of Jesus, His incarnation, His life, His death, His resurrection and His ascension all combine to deal with human sin.

6. As a result of all this, through Jesus Christ, all who believe have life (4:9, 5:11-12)

7. All this may be summed up by saying that Jesus is the Savior of the World (4:14)

The whole initiative lay with God. It was God who sent His Son to be the Savior of men and women.

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S PLAN...TO ACCEPT HIS PLAN AS WRITTEN.

John's Idea of the Holy Spirit

In this epistle, John has less to say about the Spirit....in that he covered the subject thoroughly in the Gospel of John.

The function or work of the Holy Spirit is powerfully depicted in the gospel.

However, it is John's intent in this epistle to show a function of the Holy Spirit as a liaison between God and His people. It is the Spirit who makes us conscious that there is within us the abiding presence of God through Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:24b, ".....And this is how we know that He lives in us; We know it by the Spirit He gave us."

1 John 4:13, "We know that we live in Him and He in us, because He has given us of his Spirit."

It is the Spirit who enables us to grasp the precious fellowship with God which is being offered to us.

**Trust in His Spirit,
rely on His strength,
obey His Word,
and all will go well.**