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Study Series: Unfailing Love in Uncertain Times

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Lesson Title: “Love and Antichrist” (pp. 21-33)

Session 2

March 12, 2023

The main point of this lesson is: In a world of false teaching, God expects a persevering love.

Focus on this goal: To help adults resolve to love God and one another despite the false teachings that would turn that love upon themselves

Key Bible Passage: 1 John 2:3-27

Before the Session

On a large piece of paper or board, write I Love \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . Provide an appropriate writing utensil. (Step 1)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

As learners arrive, direct them to the “I Love \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” statement and encourage them to write in the surrounding area words or phrases to complete the statement. Read aloud some of the answers that learners provided.

Ask: Would we all agree that ‘love’ is a good thing? Write me in the blank. Inquire: Can we love ourselves? What does that look like? Can love for self be bad?

Explain that, in today’s passage, we’ll look at how God intends for us to love even in the face of false teaching.

Step 2. Embracing Radical Love, Part 1

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:3-6 aloud. Point out the word “this” and explain how that pronoun points to the concepts presented in 1 John 2:1-2: Christ as our advocate and propitiation.

Direct attention to the opening paragraphs of Day One (p. 21) and consider together the rich definition the author gives for the word obedience.

Read the paragraph (p. 22) that begins “Belief and obedience go hand in hand.” Invite learners to consider their own lives and how well their lives point to their love, obedience, and faith in God.

Step 3. Embracing Radical Love, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:7-11, and as that’s being read turn in your own Bible to John 13:34-35. Read those verses and, as a group, draw parallels between the two passages.

Use the Day Two content (p. 23) to help learners see that, as followers of Christ, we are to allow Him to transform our affections—this means we are called to love.

Point out that hatred, not love, marked false teachers in John’s day. Ask: How is hatred proclaimed in our world, perhaps even from our pulpits? What might John say to those teachings? Stress the dangers of hatred, which are prevalent today in false teaching just as in John’s day. Emphasize that the teachings of Jesus do not line up with hatred.

Step 4. Embracing Radical Love, Part 3

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:15-16. Use the opening paragraphs of Day Three (pp. 24-25) to help learners understand John’s teaching of “the world” and what it means to reject it.

Point out that finding satisfaction in God alone is the antidote to the trappings and danger of all the world dangles before us. As a group, walk through the three weapons of the world (pp. 25-26): the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of one’s life.

Offer a few examples (a new boat, a home upgrade, a promotion at work) of things that are not inherently bad, but can draw us away from God as we become more worldly in our love.

Step 5. Abiding in Christ in an Anti-Christ Culture, Part 1

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:17-18 aloud. Use the opening paragraph of Day Four (p. 27) to contrast the world we can perceive through our senses with the supernatural world we can’t see, touch, taste, hear, or smell. Point out that we can become so consumed with the material world that we forget (or ignore) the supernatural world, which is real.

Invite a volunteer to read 2 Peter 3:8 and Psalm 90:4. Use those verses to helpexplain John’s idea of “last hour.”

Use Day Four content (pp. 27-28) to consider the antichrists—or false teachers—and how their teaching distorts real truth.

Ask: What should each believer be doing daily to be confident in our faith and be ready to identify false teaching?

Step 6. Abiding in Christ in an Anti-Christ Culture, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:19-23 aloud. Continue considering the idea of antichrists by using the opening paragraphs of Day Five (pp. 28-29).

Point out that false teachers stand as opposites of true believers; Christians root our lives in the Word of God, persevere, and follow Jesus’s words completely. Stress that, as we walk in love and obedience, we will see more clearly when false teaching is shared.

Use the second half of Day Five (p. 30) to point out the characteristics of a true believer. In particular, guide learners to put into concrete terms what it means to live according to the Spirit and to abide in the gospel.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Read aloud the last paragraph of Day Five (p. 30). Repeat the sentence in the center of that paragraph: “The gospel says Jesus is all you need.” If you have a personal story of false teaching that invaded a church or class in which you were a part, briefly share how the addition or subtraction from the gospel proved the falsehood.

Close with prayer, inviting learners to consider their own willingness to obey Christ fully, love others, and be on guard against false teaching.

