

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core Beliefs

- Trinity

“I believe that Jesus is God in the flesh—who died and rose bodily from the dead.”

- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

Core Practices

- Worship
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

None of us wants to be taken in, tricked or made a fool of, do we? But we all recognize that there are lots of people out there who would love to do just that—whether it’s a scam on the internet, by phone or even in person. But do we also realize that there are those who, intentionally or otherwise, also are in the business of misleading or deceiving others about matters of faith and practice. And I’m not just talking about the “out there” kinds of fringe groups. The apostle John’s warning about those who seem convincing and proper but really aren’t lined up with God’s truth is as relevant today as it was then, and it will serve us well to take notice. I’d encourage you to look closely at this week’s study as Sandy (our Engage writer) leads us to encounter God’s truth—and His person—in His Word this week.

In His truth and grace,

On the journey,

Richard Gotthardt, Pastor of Spiritual Formation

If you are new to using the Engage:

There is a short guide that will give you the “Who, Why, What, and How” of using the *Engage* study Guide. You may access it through the Grace Community Church website at (www.gracecommunityaz.org). (Access the Spiritual Formation Ministry page and click “Resources” on the left panel.)

Review from last week’s study of 1 John 2:3-17:

Last week we began to observe what God’s Word tells us we can “know,” and how we can know it. We also saw once again John’s exhortation that what we say must be proven by how we live. We observed God’s love is perfected in those who obey His Word— that loving our brother is evidence that we abide in the light with God, while loving the things in the world is evidence that the love of God is not in us.

Memory Verse for this week:

*“No one who denies the Son has the Father;
whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”*

1 John 2:23

Day 1 (1 John 2:18-29, 4:1-6)

Read 2 Peter 1:1-12. Pray and ask God to establish you in the truth which is present with you so you might be useful and fruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Read through our core passages for this week. Record what you perceive as the tone of these verses.

According to 1 John 2:26, why is he writing to them?

Engaging the Greek

Antichrist [*antichristos* /an·tee·khris·tos/] literally an opposer of Christ or one who usurps the place of Christ, found only in John's epistles and collectively meaning all who deny that Jesus is the Messiah and that the Messiah is come in the flesh (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7). We do not know exactly whom John had in mind, but most probably Jewish opposers to the Messiahship of Christ. It occurs nowhere else in the NT.¹

Read through the passage again and mark the word *antichrists* and any appropriate pronouns or synonyms. List below all that you learn about these who were trying to deceive them. Use the 5 W's and an H (who, what, when, where, why & how) to help you observe all that you can.

Do you believe that there are people in the world today that are trying to deceive **you**? Why or why not?

Day 2 (1 John 2:18-29, 4:1-6, various New Testament passages)

Read or recite your memory verse. Pray before beginning your time in His Word!

Read once more through our core passage for the week and mark the word "*anointing*." Record below all that you observe about the anointing.

Read the following passages and list what you learn about the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16-17, 26 -

John 15:26 -

John 16:5-16 -

¹Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). *The complete word study dictionary : New Testament* (electronic ed.) (G500). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

1 Corinthians 2:9-14 -

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 -

James 4:5 -

What connection do you observe between the Holy Spirit and the anointing?

Engaging with the Greek

"anointing" *chrísma*, to anoint. The anointing (Ex. 29:7; 30:25). The specially-prepared anointing oil was called *chrísma hágion* (*hágion* [39], holy). By metonymy used of the Holy Spirit in 1 John 2:20, 27 where it signifies an anointing which had been experienced, a communication and reception of the Spirit (cf. John 16:13). The allusion is to the anointing and consecration of kings and priests (Ex. 28:41; 1 Sam. 10:1). This was emblematic of a divine spirit descending and abiding upon them from God, as was afterwards the laying on of hands (Deut. 34:9). In Dan. 9:26 *chrísma* stands for the Anointed One, Christ (*christós* [5547]), as it stands for the Holy Spirit in 1 John 2. *Chrísma* is not merely a figurative name for the Spirit as seen from the expressions *chrísma échete* ("you have an anointing" [a.t.] 2:20) and *elábeta* ("you received" [a.t.] 2:27). The word seems chosen on the one hand, to give prominence to what the readers had experienced, and on the other hand, by referring to the OT practice, and especially to Christ, to remind them of their calling and mark (1 Pet. 2:5, 9).²

Do you have an anointing from the Holy One? What does God's Word promise you as a result?

Day 3 (1 John 2:18-29, 4:1-6)

Read or recite your memory verse. Once again, take the time to go before your Heavenly Father and petition Him to transform your life by the renewing of your mind through His Word.

Today you will be reading through the text, marking key words and recording your observations on the lists that you began in earlier lessons. If this is your first time using the Engage, simply begin your lists now on separate sheets of paper. Perhaps later, you can go back and add to your lists from our previous studies in 1 John. Read through the passage and, if you have not already marked these words while doing the first week's Overview lesson on 1 John, mark in a distinctive color or symbol the following words.

"know" [may also be translated "recognize" in NIV]

²Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.) (G5545). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

Use your markings to add to the list you began last week. It is the list with two columns, "What I Can Know." and "How I Can Know It."

Mark *abide, remain, continue* with the same color or symbol, and list what you observe. (All these English words are translated from the same Greek word, *meno.*)

Mark *God, Jesus* and appropriate pronouns, as best you can tell, and then add the details of who, what, when, where, why or how that you observe to your lists.

Now spend some time reflecting on the details of your list concerning those trying to deceive you (DAY 1), along with what you recorded on your "What I Can Know" and "How I Can Know It" lists. What might be topics that *they* could attempt to deceive you concerning?

According to our text, what tactics might you expect them to use?

Day 4 (1 John 2:18-29, 4:1-6, 2 Peter 1:1-12)

Read or recite your memory verse. Begin your study time with prayer!

As you read once more through the Scripture passage, take special note of the commands included. These commands do not apply only to those receiving this letter but to all believers.

Listed below are three verses that contain a command (the last verse actually contains two). Next to each verse, record 1) what is being commanded, **and** 2) any stated reason, purpose or outcome from obeying the command.

1 John 2:24 -

1 John 2:28 -

1 John 4:1 (remember there are two commands in this one verse) . . .

1 John 4:1 presents two commands and the following five verses give some specific criterion to follow in obedience to the commands. What are the conditions whereby we can determine if the spirits are "from God" or "not from God"?

How does what you have seen today challenge you in your faith?

Engaging the Greek

Each of the verbs in the verses listed above (abide, [remain/continue], believe, test) is in the present tense, active voice, imperative mood. This means that 1) they indicate a command (imperative), 2) that the subject (you) is responsible for taking the action commanded (active), and 3) that the action is to be continuous and ongoing (present tense).

How does it give you confidence in dealing with those who might be trying to deceive you?

Look once more at 2 Peter 1:1-12. Record what God commands us to practice in our faith.

Day 5 (1 John 2:18-29, 4:1-6)

The Core Competency we will reflect on this week is our belief regarding the **Trinity**. Our creed says, **“I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”**

2 Corinthians 13:14 *“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”*

The four Assessment Statements listed below are ones that we can use to evaluate the authenticity or fullness of this belief in our own personal lives, as well as to be able to recognize those who may try to deceive us.

1. I believe that the God of the Bible is the only true God.
2. I believe that the God of the Bible is one in essence, but distinct in person – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. I believe that Jesus is God in the flesh – who died and rose bodily from the dead.
4. I believe that the Holy Spirit is God and dwells in Christians to empower them to live the Christian life.

In today’s society, all religions are welcome—unless they are exclusive. To say that your approach to God is the only valid approach is a cultural offense of the highest order. The prevailing idea is that all religions and belief systems are equally correct and valid.

However, 1 John 2:23 makes a very exclusive claim. What is it?

How about you, are you trying to be all-inclusive? Have you bought into, or allowed for the idea that Jesus is one of the many ways to heaven?

Can we have a relationship with God aside from Jesus Christ? Are you sure? On what Scripture do you base your faith?

In what ways did your study this week support your belief in the Trinity and these Assessment Statements?