

**October 23**

**Scriptures:** Read 1 John 2

**Key Verse:** “The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” (1 John 2:17)

### **Overview**

As stated in the introduction, John was concerned about the effect of heretical teaching on his “dear children” (v. 1). These heretics (known as “Gnostics”) were spiritual “elitists” who saw the Gospel as being too simple, and they longed for the “depths” of the mysteries of God. Some of them saw the biblical account of creation as inadequate; they believed in a kind of spiritual evolution whereby the world arose through generation or emanation from God over and through a long series of “aeons”. They saw the material world as radically separated from the immaterial world. And they saw Jesus, not as God made flesh, but as someone who only seemed to be God. A common view was that Christ’s divine nature was only a temporary condition that came at His baptism and went before His crucifixion. Irenaeus, one of the Church “fathers” wrote of the Gnostics as “these blasphemous systems which divide the Lord... saying that he was formed of two different substances” (Against Heresies III, 16:5).

One of the consequences of Gnosticism was a moral gap between what you preached and how you lived. They saw all matter (including your body) as evil, so only evil behaviour was expected. But, you could soar to the heavenlies with your spirit — so live like the devil, but worship like an angel.

This is why you see so much in this chapter about obeying the word, loving your neighbour, walking as Jesus did, living in the light, confessing that Jesus is who He says He is, and doing the will of God. We are to “continue in Him” until He comes (v.28). His truth is not ephemeral but historical.

### **Prayer**

Thank “You, O Lord, that if we sin, we have “You as our Advocate, a Lawyer for our defense.  
Thank ‘You that “Your righteousness is placed on our account.