

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."



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George L. Faull, Editor

Anointing of the Holy Spirit

-- By Terry Carter

Dear Brother Carter,

What is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that John mentions in **I John 2:20-27**? We have a lot of charismatic people in this area and they believe John is speaking about a special anointing that only certain individuals receive.

ANSWER: We need to put this in context. Two things in particular are important to remember:

1. At the time John was writing this, there were still those around on whom the apostles had laid their hands. They did, in fact, have a special measure of the Spirit. However, this is not available to us today as no apostles are living.
2. The Book of **I John** was written in response to the Gnostics. Their name means "the knowing ones". They believed that they had special personal revelation that could only come to certain people. This knowledge was not available by any ordinary means, according to their belief.

There are those who hang their hat on the first point above. They believe that John is referring to those among them who had the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. Personally, I am not convinced by this, although there may be something to it. The language of the passage itself and the context seem to indicate that John is talking to any and all Christians, not just particular individuals.

I believe John is refuting the Gnostic teaching here. He is saying that you don't need to let these people deceive you. You have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you and that is far better than their supposed "hidden knowledge". Further, they had the revealed Word of God through the apostles.

You will notice that John specifically mentioned those who were trying to deceive them. Also, he says that they know the truth. No hidden knowledge can change that. If what they heard from the beginning abides in them (the truth they already know) they will abide in the Son and the Father. They don't need any supposed "knowing one"

(Gnostic) to teach them. They had already been taught and had the Spirit within them. All they needed to do was to abide in what they had already been taught.

If you think about it a bit, you realize that the Charismatics are a modern day counterpart to the Gnostics.

They claim to have hidden personal knowledge that cannot be gained through any normal means.

They try to deceive us with such supposed revelation.

But we have no need to be taught by them because we already know the truth and we have the Spirit dwelling within us. All we need to do is abide in what we have already been taught.

We don't need these "knowing ones" (Charismatics) to teach us.