**What You Heard from the Beginning**

**The Word**

Read together 1 John 2:18-27

**The Big Idea**

In the midst of ever-changing views of Jesus and spirituality, we are called to remain steadfast by remaining in our life-giving relationship with Jesus and remaining in his teachings as passed down by his original followers.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider the use of the term “antichrist” in this week’s passage. Discuss together what you think John means by that term and what he’s picturing in using that term.

2. On Sunday we talked about some of Jesus’ particular views on various issues (see point II.A.3 below). On what issues (from that list or otherwise) are you currently experiencing the most questions and challenges, either in your own mind or from people who are close to you? How have you been processing that lately?

3. On Sunday, we were encouraged to be “a community of humble conviction.” Spend some time discussing what that should look like practically (for example, what conversations should be taking place? What should people be experiencing from us? What are some potential blind spots? In what ways do we need to be equipped? etc.).

4. John’s call to his readers was to “remain” (v. 24 and 27). What steps can you take this week to proactively remain?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. The context of John’s letter

A. A group of people had bought into alternative views of Jesus, left the churches, and were propagating their ideas (v. 26)

B. The content of their beliefs are somewhat unknown, but it seems they were denying that Jesus was the eternal son of God fully come in the flesh and denying the sacrificial and atoning nature of his death (see 2:22, 4:2-3, 5:6)

II. Our context today

 A. The scandal of particularity

1. The idea that the Creator of all revealed himself in such a particular way, at a particular point, in a particular man: Jesus of Nazareth.

2. The implications of that are that this one particular man’s views are authoritative for all

3. Consider Jesus’ particular views on salvation (Jn 14:6), eternal life (Mt 7:13-14), his sacrificial death (Mk 10:45), Satan and the spiritual realm (Jn 8:44), sexual ethics (Mt 19:4-6), pursuits of this world (Mt 6:19-20)

B. Every culture has its own particular views that may collide with Jesus’ particular views.

1. Our current culture has particular views of science, humanism, relativism, and consumerism

2. These views often collide with Jesus’ views

3. In our churches there will be a variety of people who affirm Jesus’ views, deny Jesus’ views, or question Jesus views

a. We are called to be a community of humble conviction

b. We stand on the historic teachings of the apostles, yet we do so humbly and in a way that creates room for those who are questioning and doubting these teachings to safely explore them with us.

III. John’s pastoral response

A. He offers them perspective (v. 18-19)

1. They are living in the “last hour” and the spirit of anti-Christ is already at work. So, they shouldn’t be surprised at what is taking place.

2. The people who have left their churches were never really authentic believers. Their membership was merely external

3. See also 2 Timothy 4:3

 B. He offers them encouragement (v. 20-21)

 1. They have an anointing from Jesus = the Holy Spirit

2. They have all the spiritual resources they need in Him, and they know the truth as he confirms it in their hearts and minds

3. Notice the Holy Spirit’s role is not primarily to reveal new truths, but to confirm and strengthen them in the truths they already know.

C. He offers them a call: “remain” (v. 24 and 27)

 1. Remain in the teachings they heard “from the beginning.”

 2. Remain in Jesus himself

3. Jesus himself says “if you remain in my and my words remain in you.” (Jn 15:6)

4. In our cultural moment, when so many are walking away from core historical teachings of the Christian faith, we are called to “remain” and to let our roots grow deep in those truths, and to humbly offer those truths to others.