

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sermon: The Antichrists Part 2

Topic: Who is the Antichrist?

Scripture Text: 1 John 2:18–23

07/23/2017

1 John 2:18–23 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. ²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. ²¹ I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

The term or the title “antichrist” appears only 5 times in the Bible and not once in the Book of Revelation. Only one biblical writer uses the term and that is John. (*1 John 2:18 [2x], 22, 4:3, 2 John 7*). It is interesting that John the writer of Revelation does not use the word.

We looked at how John uses the word a little last week the first time it appears is in the 18th verse of our focus passage.

¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

The first time it is used is as a proper “Title” “The Antichrist”. I understand this to mean that there is a key personality to whom this title applies.

Definition: anti- a prefix meaning “against, opposed to, prejudicial to” counteracting (anti-abortion; anti-semitic, anti-slavery, anti-virus and anti-freeze).

Not to confuse you more but the first use of Antichrist does not have the word “The” in front of it in every translation. Some just have “antichrist” in lower case. (ASV, ESV, KJV) those with “the Antichrist” (NKJV, NLT, NIV {no capital}).

But in John 4:1 all but the KJV use the term “the antichrist” in lower case.

You can see why there is confusion.

A second type of “antichrist” - So based on this definition it is that anyone that is against or opposed to Christ is an antichrist.

There are more peoples that fall into that category than we may realize. If a person is anti-Christianity that person is an antichrist. If a person is against the church demonstrated by disdain or not attending (*1 John 2:19*) they are an antichrist. If a person denies God and Jesus they are antichrists. (*1 John 2:22*)

There are many “antichrist” that hide behind the banner of Christianity or church membership, but it is by their fruits (actions) that they will be revealed. (1 John 2:19)

1 John 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.*

These people are called “antichrists” (v18)

A third identity of an “antichrist” is one, who denies the father and or the Son,

1 John 2:22 (NKJV) ²² *Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. (2 John 7)*

This person could be in or outside of the church.

There is a fourth category of “antichrists”, those that are lead by the influence of “the spirit of the antichrist”

1 John 4:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. **And this is the spirit of the Antichrist**, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.*

We cannot forget that most of our struggles are with evil spirits.

Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

The one called “the Antichrist” is an evil spirit influencing humans to deceive, to lie, to be false prophets and false teachers. We are to test those spirits and one basic test is to know that they confess that Jesus has come into the world and is the Son of God (1 John 4:2).

Let me summarize up to this point. I have mentioned four categories of “antichrist”

1. The Antichrist – an actual personality, a demonic spirit of Satan but not Satan himself. Here it is a proper name/title and refers to the coming final world ruler energized by Satan who will seek to replace and oppose the true Christ¹
2. Antichrists – anyone that at one time called themselves Christians, or church members but left the church for their own personal reasons and not united with another body of believers dishonoring the bride of Christ. (1 John 2:18-19)
3. Anyone that denies God and that Christ has come in the flesh. (1 John 2:22)
4. Those that are led by the “spirit of the antichrist” to deceive, lie, spread false teachings, and act as false prophets influenced by the “antichrist,” (1 John 4:1–3)

¹ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [*The MacArthur Study Bible*](#) (electronic ed., p. 1967). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

Who is “the” Antichrist?

The word used here is the compound Greek word ‘*antichristos*’ which is defined as “opposed to Christ”. There is no article (i.e. “the”) in front of the word in the original Greek. The word is just “antichrist”. An “antichrist” is simply one who is anti/against Jesus. The Bible informs us that anyone can be an “antichrist” if they “deny Jesus”. Notice how these antichrists are defined in the following passages.

Preterism - generally believe the antichrist/beast was the Roman emperor Nero who murdered Christians and Jews in the first century A.D. To Preterist, the beast is dead.

Futurism - By Far the most popular interpretation remains the “Futurist”. According to Futurists, the beast is still on the horizon;

Historicism - From the time of the Reformation (16th Century) until the late 1800’s the vast majority of Protestant scholars firmly believed the beast was snarling right in front of them. **They saw prophecy fulfilled throughout Church history until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

Now here are three different views held by many well known scholars and theologians. It is not strange that well meaning men differ on points of doctrine. Another set of divergent views center around the Rapture. There are those that believe in pre-trib rapture, mid-trib rapture and post-trib rapture.

The theory of a future one man antichrist (futurism) was manufactured prophecy from the 15th century and was written by some people known as the Jesuits.

Through the course of history there have been many people labeled the “antichrist”. Promoted by this idea of a one man embodied as “the Antichrist”.

Just to name a few people that were said to be the antichrist include:

Nero, 4-5 Popes, Napoleon Bonaparte, Adolf Hitler, John F. Kennedy. Henry Kissinger Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev, Pope Benedict XVI, Barack Obama and Bill Gates III

<http://blog.rose-publishing.com/2016/03/16/14-people-accused-of-being-the-anti-christ/#.WXImOFBrge0>

This one man antichrist idea was introduced and taught by the Jesuit order of the Roman Catholics. Many believe they did so to throw suspicion away from them as being part of the “antichrist” system.

We do not have the time to delve deeply into the topic of the “antichrist” and the Jesuits on Sunday mornings. But if we look at our focus passage, John’s words seem to support the **Historicism** view that “the Antichrist and “antichrists” are already here. (*1 John 2:18*)

The question that is still out there is, “what about the antichrist often taught about in the Book of revelation?”

We will try to cover that next week.

Conclusion:

There is not just one historical or future figure that can be labeled as being the true antichrist. There have been, there are and there will be people who are against God and Christ. There are those that are directly influenced by the spirit of the antichrist.

Many people are antichrists (anti – Christ). Anyone who denies Jesus, His church or His people are antichrists. Antichrists are simply those who are opposed to Christ and all that He stands for.

END

Scripture: Focus Passage: **1 John 2:18–23**, *1 John 2:18 22, 4:3, 2 john :7, 1 John 2:19, 1 John 4:1–3, Ephesians 6:12*

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<http://www.bibleanswershow.com/2013/04/was-adolf-hitler-antichrist-what-about.html>