

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sermon: The Antichrist Part 1

Topic: What is Antichrist?

Scripture Text: 1 John 2:18–19

07/16/2017

1 John 2:18–19 (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.

Well it is good to be back and I am looking forward to continuing in the series through John's epistles. 1 John 5 chapters, 2 John 1 chapter and 3 John 1 chapter. Although consisting only of 7 chapters, the epistles of John are power packed and full of knowledge for believers. It focuses on the false teachings and doctrine within and surrounding the church.

One of the main false teachings affecting the church came from those who could be identified as “Gnostics” a belief called Gnosticism.

Gnosticism – belief that matter (body) is evil (not the soul) and that emancipation comes through special knowledge available to just a few. (i.e. Jim Jones, David Koresh, Marshall Applewhite (heaven's Gate, L. Ron Hubbard (scientology), Charles Taze Russel (Jehovah's Witnesses), Joseph Smith (Mormons) and others like them.

In our focus passage for the day the major thought that stands out is the topic of “antichrist”. There are three major groups of thoughts that include some of the most respected theologian and bible scholars ever known. I am not going to go into them but I want to mention them for your edification. The three major groups are:

Preterism - Those who accept a “preterist” interpretation of Revelation generally believe the beast was the Roman emperor Nero who murdered Christians and Jews in the first century A.D. Hank Hanegraaff, Sigmund Brouwer, Gary DeMar, John Now, Ken Gentry Jr., Samuel Frost, Kurt Simmons and many others teach this idea. **To Preterist, the beast is dead.**

Futurism - By Far the most popular interpretation remains the “Futurist” one reflected in the best selling “Left Behind” series. According to Futurists, the beast is still on the horizon; a monster that will only lurch into action after the Rapture. Leading proponents of Futurism today are Tim LaHaye, Tommy Ice, Jack Van Impe, John Hagee, Chuck Smith, Hal Lindsey and Irving Baxter Jr. **Both Preterist and Futurists see the beast as one Satanic individual; and evil person. The biggest difference between them is the timing when the “antichrist” shows up.**

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. Such was the doctrine of Martin Luther, Philip, Melancthon, John Calvin, John Knox, KJV translators, John Wesley, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop J.C. Rylie, Thomas Crammer, Matthew

Henry, Charles Spurgeon, Dr, Martin Lloyd-Jones and countless others. **They saw prophecy fulfilled throughout Church history until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

Source: <http://www.who-is-the-antichrist-today.com>

Note: At present my view are more in line with this group.

I don't want to get too deep into the weeds so let look at our focus passage.

V18 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.

Little children - in John's Gospel and including his epistles, he uses the term "little children" 10 times. Often used to denote new converts and also as a term of endearment.

V18 b - it is the last hour; - the term last hour I believe marks the last time period before the next event on God's calendar to occur that will be the Rapture, Tribulation and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

V18 c - that the Antichrist is coming,

Please take notice that the word "antichrist" is mentioned three (3) times in this passage. It is only mentioned only five (5) times in total throughout the whole Bible, but never in Revelation. Also what is very important is that it is only capitalize once. It is capitalize as a proper noun indicating an individual, "**the Antichrist**".

V18 c - even now many antichrists have come.

Here the word is used in its plural sense indicating to me that the label "antichrist" is used to apply to many others other than "THE ANTICHRIST".

John is saying way back in the first century that many antichrists have already come and because of that it confirms that we are in the last days (time period).

V19 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.

John begins to identify those of whom he is speaking of. Notice that these "antichrist" were once in the church but not truly believers in the church.

This is the case today. As I stand her before you I know in my heart that everyone that is a member of the church does not fully believe the Bible. Some do not fully believe that Jesus is all that He says He is.

Remember that Paul, John and James wrote extensively about false teachers and false prophets within the church. It is no different today. Not only are their false teachers and false prophets within the church but there are false teachers and false prophets with their own churches.

Matthew 7:15-16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. ...

V19B for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us;

John provides proof that they were not of them because if they were they would not have left them.

People give a wide variety of excuses as to why they left the church. If it is a bad church they were at then they should leave but also find another church and choose more wisely. To leave a church and not find another is not the actions of a committed Christian. There are real reasons that may be all about them.

V19C but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

Manifest, - readily (easily) perceived by the senses and especially by the sense of sight. Synonyms: apparent, evident, transparent, and unmistakable.

Often the actions of people will reveal who they really are. It will reveal the depth of their love for the church, fellow Christians and also for Christ.

As I close for today, you may ask the question as to why would John be so hard on people who left the church?

Remember last week's message that all true believers are children of God and part of God's spiritual family through Jesus Christ. Typically there is love within the family and you do not leave the ones you love if your love is true for Christ and our brothers and sisters.

The message on the "New Old Commandment" pointed out that the foundation of our Christian fellowship is "Love"

"a new commandment I write".

The newness is that Christians/disciples should demonstrate love to one another.

*John 13:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ **A new commandment** I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you **have love for one another.**"*

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." (Proverbs 10:12)

This is a very important attitude for Christians.

There is no excuse for a Christian to leave the church and never attend another. This attitude is "anti-Christian" therefore and an attitude of "anti-Christ"

END

Scripture: Focus Passage: **1 John 2:18–19, Matthew 7:15–16, John 13:34–35, 1 Peter 4:8**

John Teaches on Antichrist

John refers to the false teachers as “antichrists” (2:18), noting that they have the spirit of the Antichrist (4:3). They rejected that true knowledge of God comes through the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ, by means of the Incarnation. They spurned the human life of Jesus as the revelation of God. Therefore the origin of any doctrine of “Antichrist” is of necessity **related to the belief that there is a “Christ.”** In the context of Christianity, **of course, Jesus of Nazareth is that Christ**

John’s explicit references to the “antichrist” reveal several important facts:

1. The Johannine community had been told that an opponent of Christ would come. He is the Antichrist, an eschatological figure of evil. Though John is the only author of Scripture to use the term “antichrist,” he makes it clear the concept, and the term itself, was already being used in the early church (cf. 2:18).

2. “Many antichrists have come” (reflecting the warning in *Mark 13:22* of “false Christ’s and false prophets” and “deceivers”; cf. 2:26 and 2 *John 7*). John clearly makes a distinction between many “antichrists” (plural) and “Antichrist” (singular), between the many who have come and the one who is to come.

3. **The antichrists had left the church** because they did not belong to the community of the faith. They were unregenerate and energized by an evil force (4:3).

4. The antichrists were of the world (that evil, organized system that under the rule of Satan is the opponent of God), not of the Christian community (4:1–5; 2 *John 7*).

5. The heretics claimed a unique knowledge of the truth (**Gnosticism**) and asserted that other Christians spoke falsely (2:22, 27).

6. They denied that Jesus was the Christ; thus John classified them as “antichrist.”¹

¹ Akin, D. L. (2001). [*1, 2, 3 John*](#) (Vol. 38, p. 267). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Notes:

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.

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

Conclusion:

There is not just one historical or future figure who can be labeled as being the true antichrist. Many people are antichrists (anti – Christ). Anyone who denies Jesus is anti Christ. Antichrists are simply those who are opposed to Christ.

Are you ready for the real bombshell? The theory of a future one man antichrist was manufactured prophecy from the 15th century and was written by some very evil people known as the Jesuits. Are you ready for an even bigger bombshell? These Jesuits were commissioned to do this by this very antichrist power itself that John spoke of and was done to divert attention off themselves and to place it on some future fictional one man antichrist.

This was done when the early Protestants discovered that the real identity of antichrist was actually right under their nose and the word spread quickly. It was discovered that the antichrist was not an individual but an entire system that denies Jesus came in the flesh and has greatly affected what is important to God such as His sanctuary, His Church and His law.

Is a false Christ’s the same as an antichrist.