

ANTICHRIST

INTRODUCTION

- A. The first time I prepared a lesson on this subject was in response to a specific request for it.
- B. It was a challenge to prepare this lesson.
 - 1. Not because the task was overwhelming.
 - 2. But because the scriptures are few which concern it.
 - a. There is really very little to explain.
 - b. Therefore, this sermon will be brief.
- C. The importance of this sermon is in no way diminished by its brevity.
 - 1. **2nd Corinthians 11:3**
It emphasizes the simplicity of Christ.
 - 2. **Ephesians 3:4; 5:17**
It reminds us how easily understood biblical concepts truly are.

I. IDENTITY

Who is antichrist?

- A. The word “antichrist,” itself, means nothing other than “against Christ.”
 - 1. “Christ” is simply the English version of the Greek word “Christos,” translated from the Hebrew “Messiah,” and means “anointed.”
 - 2. Jesus is the anointed one, and anyone opposed to Him is against the anointed, or antichrist.
 - 3. **1st John 2:20**
 - a. In the context of antichrist, John makes a comparison, using the word “but,” and describing his audience as those who had “*an anointing from the Holy One.*”
 - b. Whether this anointing refers to a general anointing received by all Christians, reflecting that God has chosen them, or of a

specific anointing, as of the Holy Spirit, received by a limited group, is uncertain.

- c. Regardless, the contrast is apparent: antichrist opposes the anointed, whereas Christians, or at least those to whom John wrote, have the anointing.

B. 1st John 2:18-19

1. Antichrists had been among Christians, but not being sharers of Christ, they departed.
2. This does not preclude them from having legitimately been disciples at one time.

a. Acts 1:25

Judas was excluded from the apostles when he transgressed, having gone *“to his own place.”*

b. Acts 1:17

However, he had at one time *“obtained a part in this ministry”* – the apostleship.

C. 1st John 2:22-23

1. *“He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.”*
2. Doing so makes him a liar.
3. Denying Christ is not limited to the refusal to acknowledge His existence.

a. Jude 4

Some who deny Christ creep in among the saints.

b. Jude 5-6, 12

Others who have denied God in the past include the Israelites He delivered from Egypt and some of His own angels.

D. 1st John 4:2-3

1. The spirit of antichrist refuses to confess the incarnation of Christ.

2. No one has ever been known to deny that a man named Jesus of Nazareth walked the earth thousands of years ago, for that is a historical fact.
 - a. Yet, many who acknowledge the existence of such a one, refuse to admit that it was Christ in that body, the anointed one of God.
 - b. Today, there are preachers among so-called churches of Christ who say that Christ shed his divine nature when He entered a human body, thus He was the man Jesus, but not God in the flesh.
 - c. These are antichrists!

E. 2nd John 7

Those who deny Christ as coming in the flesh, who deceive, are antichrist!

F. If I were inclined to lengthen this lesson at all, I could extend it by hours just to emphasize who antichrist is **not.**

1. Antichrist is not one individual, but many.
2. Antichrist is not yet to come, but has been at work for centuries.
3. **2nd Thessalonians 2:2-3**
 - a. Nothing written concerning "*the man of sin,*" "*the son of perdition,*" identifies him with antichrist specifically.
 - b. Certainly, there are similarities, but the two terms should not be used interchangeably.
4. **Revelation 13:1-10**
 - a. Nothing written concerning the "*beast rising up out of the sea*" identifies him with antichrist specifically.
 - b. Certainly, there are similarities, but the two terms should not be used interchangeably.

II. PLURALITY

Is antichrist a single entity or many distinct persons?

A. 1st John 2:18

1. In comparing various translations of this verse, we see that **antichrist** is not necessarily **the** antichrist.
 - a. "...you have heard that the Antichrist is coming..." (NKJV)
 - b. "...ye have heard that Antichrist shall come ..." (KJV)
 - c. "...ye heard that antichrist cometh..." (ASV)
2. The question of accuracy in translation set aside, the fact that this verse speaks of "**many antichrists**" settles the matter.

B. 1st John 2:19

The repetition of the word "*they*," which appears four or five times, and the use of the word "*them*," certainly indicates plurality.

C. 2nd John 7

The deceivers who are antichrist are **many**!

III. SETTING

When might antichrist arise?

A. 1st John 2:18

1. Well before the close of the first century, the apostle John wrote that "*even now many antichrists have come.*"
 - a. The word "now" indicates the present time in which he wrote.
 - b. The word "have" shows that the activity of antichrist had been ongoing for some length of time previous to the writing.
2. According to John, the presence of antichrist proved that it was "*the last hour*," a point he emphasized by stating twice within a single verse.
 - a. Notice that he did not speak of "*the last days*" as yet to come, but present.
 - b. The age of the gospel, the New Testament dispensation, is that period of time known as the "*the last days.*"

