

INTRODUCTION

1. Please turn in your Bibles to 1 John chapter 2.
2. This morning we are looking at verse 18 which says, “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.”
3. John has just finished talking about “worldliness” in verses 15-17.
4. Now he turns his attention to the one who embodies the world, the Antichrist and antichrists.
5. The term Antichrist is a reference to the ultimate deceiver.
6. The second term, antichrists, is a reference to all false teachers which includes the gnostics that John has been addressing in this letter.
7. 1 John 2:26 (NKJV) These things I have written to you concerning those who try to **deceive** you.

8. False teachers deceive.
9. They manipulate with words.
10. Peter says they “***secretly*** introduce destructive heresies” (2 Pet.2:1, NASB).
11. Jude says they follow after “***their own lusts***” (vv.16,18, NASB).
12. They “speak arrogantly, ***flattering*** people for the sake of gaining an advantage” (Jude 1:16, NASB).
13. This is the spirit John is addressing in this letter.
14. And in doing so, he counters their lies with the truth.
15. The truth about the gospel.
16. The truth about Jesus.
17. The truth about God.
18. The truth about fellowship.
19. The truth about sin.

20. The truth about obedience.

21. And the truth about love.

LESSON

John begins verse 18 with...

I. An Endearing Address

- A. He says, “Little children”
- B. The NASB and ESV just reads “children”
- C. This is the Greek word paidia (noun) and it refers to “a person of any age.”
- D. In this context, it is speaking of a “special relationship of endearment and association” (Louw Nida).
- E. It is evident these believers in Asia Minor held a special place in his heart but that is true of all Christians as John so well notes.
- F. We have the love of God abiding in us that was given to us at salvation by the Holy Spirit

John says in 1 John 3:14 (NKJV) We know that we have passed from death to life, because ***we love the brethren***. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

Matthew Henry also notes that “Some may suppose that the apostle here addresses the first rank of Christians again; the juniors are most apt to be seduced, and therefore, “Little children, you that are young in religion, take heed to yourselves that you be not corrupted.” But it may be, as elsewhere, a universal appellation, introductive of an alarm to all Christians” (Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible).

So John warns his “little children” by first saying...

II. It is the Last Hour

- A. Last is from the word eschatos and refers to “being the last in a series of objects or events—‘last, final, finally’” (Louw Nida 610)
- B. You probably have heard of the word eschatology. “Ology” means “the study of.” Used with the word eschatos, it means the study of “last things,” like the rapture of the church, the coming Tribulation, and as

seen here in 1 John 2:18, the Antichrist.
So the word “last” refers to final things.

- C. The word “hour” is identifying when
- D. These two words are translated in the NT as “last time,” “latter times” or “last days”
- E. This is the time period “between the first and second coming of Christ” (John MacArthur, the MacArthur Study Bible: 1 John 2:18).
 - 1. Jude 1:17-18 (NKJV) But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸ how they told you that there would be mockers in the ***last time*** who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.
 - 2. 1 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV) Now the Spirit expressly says that in ***latter times*** some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.
 - 3. 2 Peter 3:1-3 (NKJV) knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the ***last days***, walking according to their own lusts.

F. We have been in the last days since Jesus was here

Hebrews 1:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² **has in these last (eschatos, final) days spoken to us by His Son**, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.

G. 2 Timothy 3 gives the events that will characterize this period:

1. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NKJV) ¹ But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

2. 1 Timothy 4:1-5 (NKJV) ¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ² speaking lies in

hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,³ forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.⁴ For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;⁵ for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

3. 2 Peter 3:3-4 (NKJV)³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

William Barclay says, “Every hour is the last hour. In the world there is a continual conflict between good and evil, between God and that which is anti-God. And in every moment and in every decision a man is confronted with the choice of allying himself either with God or with the evil forces which are against God; and of thereby ensuring, or failing to ensure, his own share in eternal life. The conflict between good and evil never stops; therefore, the choice never stops; therefore, in a very real sense every hour is the last hour” (The Letters of John and Jude).

So what is John saying pertaining to the last hour? There is...

III. The Coming Ultimate Deceiver

A. John identifies him as the Antichrist

1. Antichrist is a word which occurs only in John's letters in the New Testament (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7)
2. It has two meanings:
 - a) Anti is a Greek preposition which can mean either against or in place of
 - b) Christ is christos and means "anointed one" or in Hebrew, Messiah
3. So the word Antichrist can mean either the opponent of Christ or the one who seeks to put himself in the place of Christ" (Barclay).
4. We also find this word in the masculine form to indicate he will be a man.

5. We also find masculine pronouns used also to describe him but to be sure he is a man, Daniel 11:37 (NKJV) **He** shall regard neither the God of his fathers ***nor the desire of women***, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.

B. Scripture refers to Antichrist by numerous names or titles:

1. “Antichrist” (1 Jn.2:18)
2. “the beast” (Rev.13:4)
3. “the man of sin” (2 Thess.2:3)
4. “the son of perdition or destruction” (2 Thess.2:3)
5. “Gog” (Ezek.38:2)
6. “the little horn” (Dan.7:8)
7. A extremely powerful and ungodly “king” (Dan.11:36)
8. “the destroyer” (Isa.16:4)

9. “the extortioner” (Isa.16:4)
 10. “the head of the house of evil” (Hab.3:13)
 11. the personified “abomination of desolation” (Mat.24:15).
- C. John says they already knew the Antichrist was coming (“as you have heard” NKJV, ESV)
1. Since they knew about the coming of the Christ from the Old Testament prophecies, some may have known about antichrist from the same sources.
 2. The prophet Daniel foresaw a human leader, satanically energized, who will come to Jerusalem, enforce his will, exalt himself above all other people and gods, and wreak havoc and slaughter (Dan. 7–8; 9:26–27; 11). (JM)
 3. “The final Antichrist will be an imposing, intimidating figure of superior intellect and oratorical skills, possessing advanced military and economic expertise, who becomes the leader of the world. He will be so convincing as an ally and deliverer that Israel will sign a pact

with him to be her protector. Then he will turn against the nation and will occupy the throne in the sanctuary of the rebuilt temple, which for Israel will still symbolize the presence of God, and blasphemously present himself to the world as if he were God” (John MacArthur, The MacArthur NT Commentary: 1 John).

CONCLUSION

1. What is John saying in all this?
2. He is warning that the false teachers they have encountered, the gnostics, is only a glimpse of the ultimate coming deceiver, the Antichrist.
3. He also warns them that all false teachers, which he refers to as “antichrists” “have come.”
4. False teachers are here and have been since the fall of Adam
5. Since the introduction of sin in the world, there will always be those who oppose God and His Word.
6. That could be you sitting here this morning.

7. If you're an unbeliever you are no different than a false teacher because you align yourself with everything that is opposed to God.
8. I urge you this morning to repent and surrender your life to Jesus Christ.
9. Let's pray.