

## THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST

**TEXT: I JOHN 2:18-29**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The word "antichrist" is found four times in the Bible (I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; II John 7). The antichrist is referred to by other names. Daniel refers to him as "the little horn," and in the book of Revelation he is called "the beast."
2. In II Thessalonians 2:3, he is called "that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."
3. But the word "antichrist" is used only by John, and is found twice here in I John 2 (I John 2:18, 22).
4. First John 4:3 says, "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."
5. Second John 7 says, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."
6. First John 2:18 says, "Ye have heard that antichrist shall come." This means he will definitely come but we do not know when. He may be alive today but we do not know.
7. But I John 4:3 says the spirit of antichrist even now already "it (is) in the world."
8. First John 2:18 says, "it is the last time." This means, "the last days." These last days began at the first coming of Christ, and will continue till the second coming of Christ.
9. Hebrews 1:2 says God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."
10. First Peter 1:20 says Christ "was manifest in these last times for you."
11. The New Testament teaches that the last days will be marked by the spirit of antichrist (2:18; 4:3).

### **I. WE CAN EXPECT TO SEE THE UNSAVED IN OUR CHURCHES**

1. John says in verse 18, "Even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Unfortunately many of these antichrists sneak into churches (cf. 2:19).
2. Jude 4 says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the

- grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."
3. Second Peter 2:1 says, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."
  4. First John 2:19 says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us..." They were never saved.
  5. That is why our Lord said in Matthew 7:23, "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
  6. Our Lord said in Matthew 13:25 that Satan, our enemy "came and sowed tares among the wheat."
  7. And He said, "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."
  8. When we see professed Christians turn their back on the Lord, and go back into the world, we can suspect they were never genuinely saved.
  9. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us..." (I John 2:19).
  10. Second Peter 2:22 says, "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
  11. Remember Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve original apostles. That is a lesson for us. Our Lord said to His apostles, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70).
  12. In John 17:12, our Lord referred to Judas Iscariot as "the son of perdition." The antichrist is called by that name in II Thessalonians 2:3. This is the spirit of antichrist.
  13. A worldly lady listened to an old-fashioned preacher one day, and she did not approve of his preaching. After the meeting, she went up to him, and with disdain and contempt she said, "You are not abreast with the spirit of the age."
  14. The preacher replied, "You are quite right, I am not abreast of the spirit of the age. But I do have within me the Holy Spirit of God!"
  15. We should understand that the spirit of this age is the spirit of antichrist. First John 5:19 says, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." There is a definite article before "wickedness" (cf. I John 2:13, 14; 3:12; 5:18).

16. The whole world lies under the sway (or the power) of the wicked one, i.e. Satan.

## **II. WE HAVE AN UNCTION FROM GOD (2:20-23).**

1. To protect us from this pervasive spirit of antichrist, God has given us "an unction" (2:20). This "unction," or "anointing" (2:27) from God is given to us from God to protect us from the devil's lies.
2. First John 2:20 and 27 refer to the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who guides us and teaches us and gives us spiritual discernment. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit establishes believers in the faith and enables us to understand God's truth.
3. In John 14:17; 15:26; and 16:13, our Lord referred to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of truth" (cf. I John 4:6).
4. When John says, "ye know all things" (I John 2:20), he does not mean in an absolute sense. Only God knows all things in an absolute sense.
5. These verses refer to our capacity to recognize what is true and what is false.
6. Christians have the discernment to recognize false teaching (cf. Acts 13:6-10).
7. This discernment comes from the Holy Spirit, and from studying the Word of God (cf. Hebrews 5:11-14).
8. In I John 2:21, John says he did not write because his hearers were ignorant of the truth, but rather to confirm them in the truth that they already knew.
9. In John's day, the Gnostics were teaching lies. They denied that Jesus is the Christ (2:21-23).
10. Today there are many religious people who deny that Jesus Christ is God. The Bible says, "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (2:22, 23).
11. They are antichrist (2:22). There is one personal antichrist, but there are many people that are antichrist (2:18).
12. There are organizations that are antichrist (for example, the Jehovah's Witness cult).
13. Our Lord said in John 5:23, "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."
14. Our Lord said to the Pharisees, "Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (John 8:19).

15. Second John 9 says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

### **III. ABIDING IN CHRIST IS OUR PROTECTION FROM THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST (2:24-29).**

1. John frequently takes his readers back to "the beginning" (2:24; cf. 1:1; 2:7, 13, 14). In "the beginning" they learned sound doctrine, but later on false teachers came along attempting to "seduce" them (2:26).
2. "Seduce" means "to lead astray" or "lead into error."
3. Our Lord warned the church in Thyatira, "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Rev. 2:20).
4. The same word is used as an adjective in I Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." This is the spirit of antichrist.
5. The same Greek word is often translated "deceive." In His Olivet Discourse, our Lord said, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many...And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:4, 5, 11, 24; cf. II John 1:7).
6. This Satanic deception will get worse as we get closer to our Lord's return. Second Timothy 3:13 says, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
7. Revelation 12:9 says that during the coming tribulation, Satan will deceive the whole world.
8. Revelation 13:14 describes how the antichrist and his false prophet will deceive all them that dwell on the earth during the tribulation.
9. Revelation 18 describes the fall of Babylon at the second coming of Christ. Revelation 18:23 says, "For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."
10. This is the spirit of antichrist.
11. First John 2:27 says, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you..." This does not mean we do not need teachers in our churches.

12. Ephesians 4:11 says the Lord gave pastors and teachers to the church.
13. The apostle Paul told Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2).
14. According to I Timothy 3:2, one of the qualifications for a pastor is that he be "apt to teach."
15. What I John 2:27 means is that we can be taught directly from God. First Corinthians 2:10 says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."
16. And all we need is right here in God's Word -- "all things" (2:27).
17. Our Lord said in John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things..."
18. Second Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
19. The Gnostics (like the cults today) taught that they had additional truth, but the Bible is our only authority.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. The key word here is "abide" (2:24, 27, 28).
2. In our Lord's discourse in John 15, He said, " I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman" (15:1), and He used the word "abide" many times.
3. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:4-7).
4. Sometimes this same word is translated "continue" or "remain" (John 15:9-11). It is translated "continued" in I John 2:19 -- "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us..."
5. Sometimes the word is translated "dwell" (I John 3:17, 24; 4:12, 13, 15, 16; II John 2).
6. The only protection against the spirit of antichrist is to abide in Christ.

7. J. Dwight Pentecost says the word means, "to get your roots down into something so that one is being nourished and sustained by that in which it is rooted."
8. The *Scofield Study Bible* says, "To abide in Christ is, on the one hand, to have no known sin unjudged and unconfessed, no interest into which He is not brought, no life which He cannot share. On the other hand, the abiding one takes all burdens to Him, and draws all wisdom, life and strength from Him. It is not unceasing consciousness of these things, and of Him, but that nothing is allowed in the life which separates from Him."
9. Because some Christians are out of fellowship with the Lord, they will be ashamed when He returns (I John 2:28). This has reference to the rapture and the judgment seat of Christ.
10. Abiding in Christ is "righteous" (2:29). A child takes after his father. Our heavenly Father is righteous; therefore "every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (2:29).