

ANTICHRISTS VS JESUS THE CHRIST

I. 1 John 2:18-29

A. Four weeks ago we began a journey through First John. It's comprised of five short chapters, chock full of powerful truths. John is the *Apostle of Love* but he pulls no punches when it comes to the truth. In terms of what's true and what's not, John gives assurances to the faithful while exposing the telltale signs of impostors. Some impostors were false teachers who exited the church.

B. During my high school years, the talk among my Jesus people friends was how close we were to the end times. *The Late Great Planet Earth* was the favored textbook. "*Jesus is Coming Back Soon*" was blazed on t-shirts and bumper stickers. "*I Wish We'd All Been Ready*" was the end times anthem. Why go to college or start a career if Jesus' return is imminent? Everyone guessed who the antichrist was. Was it JFK? Nixon? Henry Kissinger? Mikhail Gorbachev? (*'Could that birthmark on Gorby's forehead be the mark of the beast?'*) Other suspects would follow. Fortunately more Biblically sound eschatological works have since emerged.

C. In today's text John will introduce us to the term *antichrist* and will do so in the plural vs the singular. It's true, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13 describe the coming of the "*man of lawlessness*," a.k.a. "*the beast*," an antichrist figure in the singular. Some eschatologists finger Nero. Others point to a person in the future. Maybe it's Trump or Schumer, Putin or Oprah?! ;-) But if you were hoping for me to talk about that Antichrist, you'll be disappointed. We'll learn many antichrists were around when John wrote his letter. Others would come later. And yes we have them still...

D. The Greek word for *anti* (an-tee) means, "*against*" and/or "*instead of*." In a broad sense, an antichrist is anyone who denies or rejects Jesus as the Christ. More narrowly, an antichrist is anyone who becomes a human agent of Satan and his minions in defiant opposition to Christ. John says they had them in the church! They were also called false teachers. Jesus leveled this warning in the Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 7:15-20 (ESV) **15** Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

E. 1 John 2:18-29 (ESV) is our text today and it will take us into Communion...

1) **V18: 18** Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. (This was written over 1,900 years ago. These words were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They were relevant for God's people in John's day, our day, and every day since. To catapult to the conclusion they were merely for us right now is blatantly presumptuous. The last hour began at the death and resurrection of Jesus and will not conclude until His return. The last hour is therefore an era, an age, a multi-millennial eon. Please stay tuned!)

2) **V19: 19** They (*antichrists, false teachers*) 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 it might become plain that they all are not of us. (Their departure was a demonstration of denunciation—a public display of rejecting Christ, liken to Judas leaving the Last Supper to betray Jesus. Some suspect these were the grandfathers of the heresy later known as Gnosticism.)

3) **V20:** But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. (Regeneration brings with it illumination—shining light on *Who* Jesus truly is and *Who* God's Word reveals Him to be. The light trickles in at first but brightens to full radiance. John trusts the Lord to keep His beloved ones enlightened, despite the propagation of deceptive teaching and the touting false messiahs.)

4) **V21-24: 21** I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. **22** Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. **23** No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. **24** Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. (I heard it said as a youth that those who instruct people in the art of detecting counterfeit money have the real stuff placed in their hands over and over again until *the feel* of the fake stuff become instantly obvious. And these days it's common practice for a clerk to take a bill of large denomination and hold it up to the light or scan it over an electronic detection device. To repeat verses 20-21: "But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.")

5) **V25: 25** *And this is the promise that He made to us--eternal life. (If you are in Christ, your eternal life has already begun. It began spiritually when you were made alive in Christ. It'll come to full physical fruition at your resurrection! Jesus spells it out in **John 5:24-29** (ESV): **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. **25** "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. **26** For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself. **27** And He has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. **28** Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice **29** and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. (As for your buried loved ones, "**Dem bones gonna rise again!**")*

6) **V26-27: 26** I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. (**Antichrists, false teachers**) **27** But the anointing that you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie--just as it has taught you, abide in Him. (**Know this, we still need teachers. They are among the ministry gifts given to the church. But the Holy Spirit dwells within those who've been regenerated. The Holy Spirit empowers, illuminates, convicts, quickens, prompts, and reminds...**)

7) So what does the Holy Spirit do with the infallible Word of God? He illuminates the truth therein. He gives us wisdom, insight, and understanding. Ever heard it said, '*I have a check in my spirit.*' Or, '*The Lord reminded me of the verse that says.*'? Those checks, caveats, prompts, nudges, reminders and His internal peace and the lack thereof, come via the Holy Spirit. Remember at the Last Supper Jesus promised and the Father delivered. **John 14:25-26** (ESV) **25** *These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.)*

8) **V28-29: 28** *And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink from Him in shame at His coming. **29** If you know that He is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of Him. (Point of clarity: He's not saying, if you practice righteousness you will be born of Him. Rather: If you've been born of the Righteous One, it should indeed lead to the practice of righteousness.)*

II. Communion

A. Who is this Righteous One? The Anointed One? Who is Jesus the Christ who some reject, blasphemy, and defiantly oppose? He is God's very own Son, the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world. He has come to take away your sins and mine. He has come to give life to those who are dead in their trespasses and sins. He has come to destroy the works of Satan. He has come to transfer you from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom where He rules and reigns forever. The Bread & Cup remind us.

B. What has the Anointed One accomplished? As the Sacrificial Lamb He absorbed the wrath of God--not for His own sins--but for yours. As Redeemer, He has paid the ransom for your redemption, freeing you from slavery to sin and the penalty of eternal death. As Reconciler, He has turned you from being enemies into friends and that forevermore. Because you were born as spiritual orphans in this dark world, He sought you out to adopt you as His own. Therefore, redemption, emancipation, reconciliation, adoption, salvation, sanctification, and glorification have been purchased for you by His blood. And the Bread & Cup remind us.

C. Considering all who Christ is and all that He has accomplished on your behalf, how could anyone ever refuse Him or reject Him or oppose Him as the antichrists defiantly do?! All knees will one Day bow but the knees of antichrists will bow differently. You have been given a better set of knees! Christ Jesus has purchased for you a better destiny. He paid for it in full with the violent shedding of His blood. He did so because He loves you! The Bread & Cup remind us...

* Pray and Serve Communion...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

1 John 2:18-29 (ESV)

18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore 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 it might become plain that they all are not of us. **20** But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. **21** I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. **22** Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the

Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. **23** No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. **24** Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. **25** And this is the promise that He made to us--eternal life. **26** I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. **27** But the anointing that you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie--just as it has taught you, abide in Him. **28** And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink from Him in shame at His coming. **29** If you know that He is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of Him.

Matthew 7:15-20 (ESV)

15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

John 5:24-29 (ESV)

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. **25** "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. **26** For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself. **27** And He has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. **28** Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice **29** and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

John 14:25-26 (ESV)

25 "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Film Clips & Other Links

Millersport Covenant Church Sermon Podcasts (MP3s on iTunes)

<http://millersportcc.com/feed/podcast>

7 Most Popular Contenders for the Title 'Antichrist' - Joe Carter - The Gospel Coalition

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-7-most-popular-contenders-for-the-antichrist/>

"There is A Redeemer" - Kathryn Scott

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yp1NAwRDp3Q>

Bonus Stuff

Romans 13:11-14 (NLT)

11 This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. **12** The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. **13** Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. **14** Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.

Romans 16:17-20 (NLT)

17 And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who cause divisions and upset people's faith by teaching things contrary to what you have been taught. Stay away from them. **18** Such people are not serving Christ our Lord; they are serving their own personal interests. By smooth talk and glowing words they deceive innocent people. **19** But everyone knows that you are obedient to the Lord. This makes me very happy. I want you to be wise in doing right and to stay innocent of any wrong. **20** The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Jude 3-25 (NIV)

3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. **4** For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. **5** Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered His people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. **6** And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling--these He has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. **7** In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. **8** In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. **9** But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" **10** Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct--as irrational animals do--will destroy them. **11** Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. **12** These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm--shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted--twice dead. **13** They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever. **14** Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of His holy ones **15** to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." **16** These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage. **17** But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. **18** They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." **19** These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. **20** But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, **21** keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. **22** Be merciful to those who doubt; **23** save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear--hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. **24** To Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- **25** to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Strong's Concordance - Anti

anti: over against, opposite, hence instead of, in comp. denotes contrast, requital, substitution, correspondence

Original Word: ἀντί

Part of Speech: Preposition

Transliteration: anti

Phonetic Spelling: (an-tee')

Short Definition: instead of, for

Definition: (a) instead of, in return for, over against, opposite, in exchange for, as a substitute for, (b) on my behalf, (c) wherefore, because.

- To read more, go to: <http://biblehub.com/greek/473.htm>

Quote by Irenaeus (Circa 185 A.D.)

"Some, in their inexperience, have ventured to seek out a name [for the Antichrist] which has the erroneous, spurious number [i.e., 616 rather than 666] ... In the first place, it is a loss to wander from the truth, and to imagine that something is the case when it is not. In addition, there shall be no light punishment inflicted on those who add or subtract anything from Scripture ... Another danger, by no means trifling, shall overtake those who falsely presume they know the name of Antichrist. For if these men assume one [number], when this one shall come having another, they will be easily led away by him. They will not recognize him as the expected one that must be guarded against."

- Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* V:XXX:1. To read more, go to: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.vii.xxxi.html>

Quote by St. Jerome

"As for the Antichrist, there is no question but what he is going to fight against the holy covenant, and that when he first makes war against the king of Egypt, he shall straightway be frightened off by the assistance of the Romans. But these events were typically prefigured under Antiochus Epiphanes, so that this abominable king who persecuted God's people foreshadows the Antichrist, who is to persecute the people of Christ. And so there are many of our viewpoint who think that Domitius Nero was the Antichrist because of his outstanding savagery and depravity."

- St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1958.

Quote by Cyril (4th Century Theologian)

"This man will usurp the government of the Roman Empire, and will falsely call himself the Christ. He will sit in the temple of God: not that which is in Jerusalem, but in the Churches everywhere."

Quote by Martin Luther

"I feel much freer now that I am certain the pope is the Antichrist."

Quote by Robert Jeffress

"I want you to hear me tonight, I am not saying that President Obama is the Antichrist. I am not saying that at all. One reason I know he's not the Antichrist is the Antichrist is going to have much higher poll numbers when he comes."

Quote by Ozzy Osbourne

"I'm not the kind of person you think I am, I'm not the anti-Christ, or the iron man."

Quote by Marilyn Manson

"Growing up going to Christian school and the concept that you're born a sinner and you don't really have a choice to change who you are has been hammered into my head and created the entire reason why I made art and made a band and made records called 'Antichrist Superstar.'"

There Is A Redeemer

By Melody & Keith Green

There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One.

Jesus my Redeemer,
Name above all names,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Oh, for sinners slain.

Thank you oh my Father,
For giving us Your Son,
And leaving Your Spirit,
'Til the work on Earth is done.

When I stand in Glory,
I will see His face,
And there I'll serve my King forever,
In that Holy Place.

Thank you oh my father,
For giving us Your Son,
And leaving Your Spirit,
'Til the work on Earth is done.

There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One,

Thank you oh my Father,
For giving us Your Son,
And leaving Your Spirit,
'Til the work on Earth is done.
And leaving Your Spirit,
'Till the work on Earth is done.

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