

The End Times and the Antichrist

1 John 2:18-19

THE APPEARING OF THE ANTICHRIST. v.18

1. What is the antichrist?

- “against Christ” Gk. *ἀντίχριστος* = anti+Christ Not so much *false* Christ as *against* Christ.
- Used 5 times in NT, only in John’s letters: 1 John 2:18 (used twice); 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 7
- Associated w/ Christological heresy: denying Jesus Christ (either His humanity or His deity).
- There is a future and singular aspect of antichrist: *you have heard that antichrist is coming*. Also in 4:3
- There is a present and plural aspect of antichrist: *even now many antichrists have appeared*. Also in 4:3

→ Summary: *Antichrist is primarily a general spirit of opposition to Jesus Christ and His teachings—a spirit which later becomes increasingly individualized and personalized.* (Ref. 2 Thes. 2:1-12)

2. The appearance of antichrist is evidence that it is the last hour. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.

- The fact that there is opposition proves that Christ has come.

3. The emphasis is on recognizing the spirit of antichrist, rather than on speculating who it might be.

- In the Bible, Christ’s return is always linked with ‘therefore, live this way,’ not ‘therefore, speculate when and how He will come back.’ 1 Thes 5:1-11; **1 Pet 4:7-10**; 2 Pet 3:11-18; Jude 17-25

4. John prepared his flock for the reality of opposition to Christ: as you have heard.

- Jesus taught John: **John 15:18-21**. Then John taught others: 1 John.

→ Application: We need to teach our children the reality of the enemy, the battle, and the Victor. 1 John 4:4

→ Application: What do the front lines of battle look like in your life? The LORD has put you in *these* battles.

THE ALIGNING OF THE WORLD. v.19

1. John is making a clear distinction between ‘them’ (antichrists) and ‘us’ (Christians).

- “They” = 6 X’s; “us” = 5 X’s. I.e., People are taking sides.

2. “They” went out from “us.”

- John is not talking about people who leave one church congregation for another.

→ John is talking about people who abandon the faith and/or deny the truth of Jesus Christ.

3. Their going out was evidence that they were never really believers in the first place.

- *...but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.*

4. Their going out was used by God to show a separation between those with Christ and those anti-Christ.

- *...but they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.*

→ The Bible makes a distinction between those who profess the faith and those who actually possess the faith.

APPLICATIONS

1. Be firmly grounded in the Bible and doctrine. Go deep with God. Do not settle for surface relationship.

2. Settle spiritual matters of the soul now: it is the last hour! Do you know Christ?

3. Reach the world for Christ: it is the last hour!

4. With sober-mindedness consider the battles to which the Lord has called you.

If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle-fields besides, is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.

-Martin Luther