

## LIVING ALERT TO ANTICHRIST 1 John 2:18

### INTRODUCTION

1. The antichrist is one of the most discussed (and speculated) topics regarding issues related to the end times.
2. It is important to look to the Bible to see what it teaches about the topic.
3. Jesus or the Apostle Paul does not use this term;
  - Jesus talked about false messiahs and false prophets,
  - while the Apostle Paul talked about the “Man of Lawlessness” (2 Thessalonians).
4. Surprisingly, the term also is not found in the Book of Revelation.
5. The only place the word “antichrist” is found in the Bible is in the letters of John (specifically 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3 and 2 John 7).
6. As we will see, different terms can be used to identify the same person.
  - With that in mind, the Scriptures distinctly speak of antichrist.
  - John and the Apostle Paul considered addressing antichrist important in equipping the saints.

**MESSAGE THEME:** *Living with discernment and certainty in understanding, identifying, and resisting the antichrist spirit.*

### REVIEW

1. John, in his role as a spiritual guide, is correcting errors regarding Jesus Christ and authentic life in God, providing us with a clear path to follow.
2. He declared that *God is light* and there *is no darkness in Him* whatsoever.
3. If you obey His commands and love others who are in fellowship with Him, you can be assured that you are in fellowship with Him and His life.
4. We looked at the development of spiritual maturation (spiritual children, young adults, and fathers and mothers) and the significance of a *vibrant Christian community*.
5. Those in fellowship with God are not to love the world but to live with a God-oriented worldview.

### PREVIEW

- John next addresses antichrist, the spirit of antichrist in the world and an epic future figure of antichrist.
- The meaning of the term antichrist is simply “against Christ” or “in “place of Christ.”
- As the apostle John records in First and Second John, an antichrist *denies the Father and the Son (1 John 2:22)*, *does not acknowledge Jesus (1 John 4:3)*, and *denies that Jesus came in the flesh (2 John 1:7)*.
- There have been *many “antichrists,”* as **1 John 2:18** states.
- But there is also coming an epic figure of antichrist who will play a significant role in the end times.

- We will cover only one verse in this teaching, so we can cover this timely topic.

## THE SPIRIT AND PERSON OF ANTICHRIST

1 John 2:18 (NASB 2020) *Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.*

### CHILDREN

- The relationship implied is that of a fatherly teacher to pupils who are childlike in their understanding.

### LAST HOUR

- The expression “last hour” lacks a definite article.
  - The reference is to the “general character” of the period versus a specific identified moment in time.
  - This “last hour” is viewed as a *theologically technical* term.
- The context suggests that the *last hour* here means primarily that period of time, whether shorter or longer, which will usher in the next movement in God’s timeline.
- NT writers regard “the last days” or, in John’s terminology, “last hour” as extending from Jesus’ resurrection to his final return, known as His second coming.

### THE ANTICHRIST

- John references an awareness or knowledge that his readers have regarding the reality and coming of the antichrist (singular).
  - The term *antichrist* means 1) one who stands “against” [opposes] Christ or 2) one who stands “instead of” Christ.
- The Scriptures do speak of an “end times antichrist,” sometimes using different terminology.
  - The O.T. speaks of an antichrist to come.
  - Jesus spoke of an antichrist to come.
  - Paul spoke of an antichrist to come.
  - This truth is not a profound or novel revelation to John’s readers.

### MANY ANTICHRISTS

- However, John says that even now, many antichrists have appeared.
  - John was saying that the spirit of antichrist is already present in these many antichrists.

1 John 2:22 (NASB 2020) *Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.*

1 John 4:1–3 (NASB 2020) *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not*

*from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now it is already in the world.*

- John's warning to his readers does not seem to be focused on a figure who will come at the end called the Antichrist.
- Rather that there is a spirit that opposes God that is at work in the world right now and we need to be on guard.

*ILLUST.: The opening ceremony of the 2024 Olympic Games mocking Jesus Christ and His holy gathering with His disciples at what we call the Last Supper, from where His church received direction to observe what we call communion, remembering His sacrifice of shedding His blood for our forgiveness of sin.*

*Then, they paraded a vile demonstration of perversion, promoting LGBTQA++ in front of the world, men, women, youth, and children.*

***THAT WAS THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST ON DISPLAY BEFORE THE ENTIRE WORLD!***

- That said, John does not say that there is not an individual to come who will be the Antichrist, but rather that the same spirit is at work now.

### **AN EVIDENCE**

- John writes that the many antichrists or the spirit of antichrist indicate the times in which they live and the times in which we live.
  - Throughout Church history, the spirit of antichrist has been alive with individuals seeking to present themselves in the place of Christ.
  - There have been and are false religions and cults trying to mimic and displace Jesus Christ and eclipse His teachings with false doctrines, also known as doctrines of demons.
- All of this serves as evidence that we live in the last hour.
- It also serves as evidence that Jesus Christ is real and that Jesus Christ did truly come. Otherwise, there would be no basis for ANTIchrist, or reason for Satan to employ this scheme.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE ANTICHRIST**

- Most Bible students and theologians whose emphasis has been on the end times believe that an individual, the Antichrist, will be the ultimate embodiment of the spirit of antichrist.
- In the end times/last hour, this person will arise, insert himself in the place of Christ, and oppose Christ in every way.
- During the future tribulation period, the world will be ruled by this evil, satanically empowered individual presiding over an evil, global governmental system.
- The Bible associates this end-times ruler with a terrible beast in Daniel and in the book of Revelation.

- The Antichrist will seek world domination and will attempt to destroy all followers of Jesus Christ and the nation of Israel.
- **An antichrist figure** is referenced in:
  - **Daniel 7:25** presents him as a *boastful king* who oppresses the Jews.
  - **Daniel 9**, a world leader who establishes a 7-year covenant with Israel and then breaks it, setting up an abomination of desolation event in **9:27**.
  - **Daniel 11:36-45** as the *willful king who blasphemes God* and Israel (Antiochus Epiphanes).
  - **Matthew 24:24** and **Mark 13:14** as instigating *abomination of desolation* (Roman General Titus)
  - **2 Thessalonians 2:1-12** as the *man of lawlessness* and *son of destruction*.
  - **Revelation 13** as *the Beast*.

## 2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-9

- The issue Paul is responding to is, was Christ's coming missed?

### The Assurance

*3 No one is to deceive you in any way! For it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness [first] is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.*

- Large-scale apostasy will come first. (Abandonment and renunciation of Jesus Christ and all things God.)
- The man of lawlessness, son of destruction, also called the antichrist by John will be revealed first.
- He opposes all religions and exalts himself above every religious leader.
- He will present himself as God, occupying the Temple of God, [which will require it being built first].

### The Reveal

*5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that he will be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is removed. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will eliminate with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and false signs and wonders,*

- Paul trained the Thessalonians in these end-time truths to secure them in the uncertainty that comes with difficult times.
- When the restraint is removed, the antichrist will be revealed in his time.
- The true Christ will destroy this antichrist figure at His return to earth.
- The antichrist will be aligned with the activity and power of Satan, performing false signs and wonders.

### REVELATION 13:1-17

Essentially, **the Antichrist** will be a world dictator who leads humanity in what seems to be a golden age, until he shows his true colors—and the judgment of God is poured out on him and his empire immediately before the return of Jesus.

1. He will operate in accord with Satan and in his power.

*Revelation 13:2 (NASB 2020) And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne, and great authority.*

2. The world will worship him.

*Revelation 13:4 (NASB 2020) they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"*

3. He blasphemed God and will be limited in his time to operate as a world leader.

*Revelation 13:5 (NASB 2020) A mouth was given to him speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.*

4. He persecutes God's people and overcomes them during this time.

*Revelation 13:7 (NASB 2020) It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority was given to him over every tribe, people, language, and nation.*

5. He will lead the world in a new religion, accommodating everyone.

*Revelation 13:8 (NASB 2020) All who live on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slaughtered.*

6. He will harness and control the world's economic system.

*Revelation 13:16–17 (NASB 2020) And he causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, 17 and he decrees that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.*

7. He will be defeated and forever punished.

*2 Thessalonians 2:8 (NASB 2020) Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will eliminate with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;*

*Revelation 20:10 (NASB 2020) And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

- We should take notice because the world stage is set for a political, religious, and economic “champion” to arise, a single political leader to organize a world-dominating confederation of nations.
- National leaders speak of a new world order. The world is being groomed.
- A personality cult will surround this final epic antichrist.

### SUMMARY

- There is a spirit of the antichrist currently at work in this last hour that will culminate in a person at the end.
- The warnings are less about identifying this figure and more about being on guard against the spirit of antichrist forces currently at work.
- Next week, we will see that these could come from within the Church and not just from outside authorities.
- We can recognize the antichrist spirit in various realms of our society (politics, economics, religion, education, etc.).
- We must stay true to the one true God and His truth and resist these evil forces we know God will one day defeat.

### APPLICATION

1. Salvation
2. Reinforced commitment to GIVE OUR ALL to Jesus and His Kingdom.
  - Immerse yourself in God’s Word and truths to protect against deception,
  - Become increasingly alert to the characteristics of the antichrist spirit to identify and expose it.
  - Give yourself to growing in faith, standing strong, and resisting the antichrist spirit in our society no matter the cost.

**LAST SLIDE: *Living in Discernment and Certainty in an Uncertain World requires understanding, identifying, and resisting the antichrist spirit.***

the epistle of  
**1 JOHN**

LIVING IN DISCERNMENT AND CERTAINTY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

1

**1 JOHN**

MESSAGE THEME – *Living with discernment and certainty by understanding, identifying, and resisting the antichrist spirit.*

2

THE PERSON AND SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST **1 JOHN**

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- Last Hour
- The Antichrist
- Many Antichrists

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Children  
Last Hour  
The Antichrist  
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An Evidence

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- 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 the man of lawlessness and son of destruction.
- Revelation 13 as the Beast.

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