

I John 2:18-24

Introduction:

The church has been under constant attack from the schemes of the devil from the time of Christ arrival going back to when Jesus was tempted by Satan himself after His 40 days and 40 nights of fasting. Paul gave warning to the Ephesian church about the schemes of the devil in Ephesians 6: ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the might of His strength. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Jesus said this in Matthew 24:⁴“See to it that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

One of John’s purposes in writing this letter is to encourage his beloved children in the Lord and to help them recognize the false teaching that was infiltrating the church. John calls them antichrist because they were teaching a different doctrine about Jesus and God the Father while also representing themselves as someone who has a special anointing therefore, they have equality with Christ.

Just this last week one of my pastor friends in Ethiopia sent me a video by Billy Graham called Forbidden Knowledge: Why the Ethiopian Bible was Banned. The Ethiopian bible has 81-88 books including the book of Jubilee which if you believe Billy Graham this Bible is God’s written word that was forbidden because the colonist from the different European countries didn’t want them to know they are a blessed and chosen people of God. The Ethiopian Bible can clear up for the Ethiopian believers the false teaching that they’re not a blessed people and instead liberate the people of Ethiopia and the African people. Coming from a well-known speaker such as Billy Graham offers validity but is the Ethiopian Bible which was written 200-800 years after the bible as we know it, was canonized a missing part of the bible? If it is, then why not believe Joseph Smith when he says he received a revelation from God and now we have the Book of Mormon.

It's so important for us as believers that to know what we believe and why we believe it. They will continue to be antichrists and false teachers who will try to infiltrate the church to destroy and take advantage of vulnerable Christians.

In our passage today, John is going to help us to understand what to look for and how to identify an antichrist; someone opposed to Christ and yet can be disguised as light. Like the Gnostics who claimed a higher knowledge and therefore if you didn't have this knowledge, you were beneath them. They followed the belief that matter (such as humans) is always evil and that spirit is always good so they couldn't and wouldn't believe in an earthly Jesus. They also taught about Jesus' deity but denied His humanity because for them all matter was evil.

Scripture Reading:

I John 2:¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they were of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be manifested that they all are not of us. ²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. ²¹ I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Everyone who denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also. ²⁴ As for you, let that which you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

1. Living in the last hour (The Warning)

- a. Children – Paidia – (vs. 18) – used differently for my little children (Teknia 2:1, 12, 26; 3:7, 18; 4:4) which is more of an affection a father has for his children. In our verse today it's used more generic as he's writing to the whole family of God.
- b. The Last Hour – started with Christ birth.

- a. We're all living in the last hour. (I Peter 1:20 – He appeared to us in these last times; Hebrews 1:1-2 – In these last days He has spoken to us in His Son). The last hour began with the coming of Jesus Christ. We know it's the last hour because the antichrists have come. (18c).
- b. Antichrist is coming and many are now here – this is evidence we're in the last hour.
 - i. Anti – generally means to be against or to oppose. John seems to have that thought but also the thought of these antichrists is not just opposing Christ but that they represent a different Christ.
 - 1. Deceivers are called antichrist. 2 John 7 – There have been many deceivers in the history of the church that John would call “antichrist.” These deceivers are present today. Word of faith televangelist, Joyce Myers – says she has a special anointing, Katherine Hicks, New Apostolic Reformation, Kenneth Hagen, Benny Hinn, TJ Jakes, They will say everyone can have an anointing, but this is not what they are referring to. They are saying that they have a special anointing which makes them a false christ or false prophet. Only Jesus has a special anointing.
 - 2. Jesus speaking in the Gospel of Matthew calls them false christ's (plural) and false prophets (plural) Matthew 24:23- says, ²³ Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ,’ or ‘There *He is*,’ do not believe *him*.²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” Antichrist is imitation of Christ.

3. Daniel 7:7,8; 20 – speaks of the antichrist who will set himself up as Christ. Revelation 13:3-8 – this is a specific person.

4.

c. What's the evidence they were antichrist?

3

i. Antichrists were in the church but left. Why?

1. Because they weren't part of the true family of God. John write's, "they left us because they're not of us, (19a) – the verb indicates a single or simple act that was completed in the past.

a. Those who are not of the faith will ultimately leave the church if they find they have no influence.

2. If they were with us, they would have remained with us. (19b). People's actions always speak louder than their words. They didn't remain because they were not of us.

3. They went out so that it might be made manifest they really were not of us. (vs. 19c). Their actions demonstrate they were never of us. Listen to the words of Jesus:

a. John 10: ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish—ever; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

2. The Evidence of those who are in the family of God.

a. Anointing from the Holy One (vs. 20)

- i. It's confirmed – they all know (Perfect Indicative active) – same word used twice in verse 21. Why do they know?
- ii. The One who anoints us is the Holy Spirit.

1. John 14:²⁶ “But the Advocate, 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 said to you.”

2. I Corinthians 2: ²¹ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, ²² who also sealed us and gave the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.

4

b. They know the truth (vs.21)

- i. This is why John is writing too them. They know and affirm the truth.
- ii. Know – Verb – Present Indicative active which means John is telling them you “know” in the present that this is a completion action on your part. No one is going to move them from what they know and believe.
- iii. No lie is of the truth. John makes this statement because the antichrists are making false statements and he's exposing them by reminding his children that if anyone is lying it's not the truth.

iv. Throughout human history something is either true or false.

There is no grey area when it comes to the truth. John 17:

¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For their sake I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

v. As believers we must discern what is truth.

1. Example of how Christians mix truth with the teachings of the world.

Matthew 22: ³⁹ And the second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 16: ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

2. I often hear Christians say that they first must learn to love themselves before they can love others or even love God. Is this what the Christians believed in the 1st century? What did Christ mean to love your neighbor as yourself. Did he mean I need to love myself first? If so, why does He then tell me to deny myself, pick up the cross and follow Him?

3. The Evidence for those who are not in the family of God. (vs. 22)

5

- a. They're Liar's – another way to describe them they deceivers of God's truths.
 - i. The liar is the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ. They lie to themselves and others about who Christ is.
 - ii. This is the antichrist – those who deny Christ the Apostle John identifies them liars. Why?
 - iii. They (antichrists) deny Jesus as the Christ who came in the flesh. Most likely they precursor before Gnosticism began to take root, these antichrists most likely taught that Jesus was a man who was born into the is world like the rest of us, but Christ Himself was only in Him during His public ministry on

earth. When did this take place? At the antichrists will say it happened at the baptism of Jesus that Christ indwelt Jesus, but He left before Jesus went to the cross. They denied that the Jesus who walked this earth, died on a cross and rose on the third day was the same person as Christ because Christ a divine emancipation who was set free from Jesus.

1. If you deny the Jesus as Christ, then you don't have the Father or the Son because you deny them both (23a). It's not they just deny the Father and the Son, but that they reject them, they disavow completely the Father and Son.

iv. The Assurance (vs. 23b)

1. If you confess the Son, then the Father is with you. Remember the words of Jesus in the gospel of John 10:30 "I and the Father are one." You can't have the Son without also having the Father.

4. The admonishment (vs. 24)

a. What you have heard from the beginning

- i. Remain/Abide in you – Verb is present imperative active. This is a command to continue to have the truths they have heard and known from the beginning to continue to abide in them.
- ii. Should you abide in what you have heard from the beginning
 1. The Father and the Son will remain/abide in you.

6

2. This how we know we're born-again Christians because we continue to abide in the Son and the Father.

Conclusion:

"The contrast between antichrists and Christians is absolutely clear. Antichrists deny the faith, depart from the faith, and seek to deceive the faithful. Christians,

on the other hand, affirm the faith and remain faithful to the end—they cannot be permanently deceived.” John MacArthur – 1-3 John Commentary. Pg. 104