

## **1 John 2:18-23**

Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. 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 they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. *NKJV*

*We are going to handle this section of Scripture in two parts. 1. The characteristics of the anti-Christ. 2. The characteristics of true believers.*

### Part 1. Characteristics of the anti-Christ:

Because the revelation that Jesus is the Messiah was so controversial, due to the exclusive claims of salvation that belong to Christ-centered teaching, many rise up and oppose these claims, even within the church.

There will be one Anti-Christ who rises up against God and leads this world in the false hope of salvation through him alone in the End Times. (see 2 Thess. 2) However, according to John, at the time of this writing, he has not come. But, his coming is being preceded by a number of anti-Christ who in similar fashion to John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the coming of the Lord (Mark 1.3), are already teaching a contradiction to the revealed Messiah.

**These anti-Christ were not found outside of the church,** but insidiously within the church of Christ. As John notes, “they went out from us,” they no longer are part of the fellowship of believers that John is writing to.

**One of the most dangerous errors that a church can hold is to deny Who Jesus Christ is.** God in His mercy has given a clear revelation of the Messiah’s identity in the Bible.

**God is more passionate about the purity of the teaching of Christ in the Church than any one of its people.** He allows these false teachers entrance into the Church but then makes their deadly teaching manifest by exposing it when they cannot shake the faith of true believers, “that they might be made manifest.”

The effects of these false teachers is two-fold: 1. They draw away the in-sincere in the faith, purifying the church body and 2. Their opposition to true Biblical teaching strengthens the faith of those who are true believers of Christ.

**Anti-Christ deny the person and work of Jesus Christ promising hope in another way and always hope in a man-centered religion.** Their teaching, while convincing, only promises a wearisome life which eventually ends in eternal separation from God. Theirs is a call to “work” for salvation while the call of Christ is to “rest” in Him for salvation. (Matt. 11.28)

**One may know the spirit of the Anti-Christ when they learn of more to “do” for assurance of a right relationship with God rather than learning more of what Christ has “done.”** The appeal of the anti-Christ is to the proud, those who will not humble themselves to receive the freely offered pardon of sin from the Savior Jesus.

“None of them were of us.” It became clear that due to their lack of trust in Jesus as the Messiah that

these anti-christs were not just “like” the true followers of Christ, but they indeed were not followers of Christ. They are lost, all-together. They don’t have a true faith that delivers them into salvation. They deny the complete work of God the Father through His willing Son in the crucifixion and resurrection. Theirs is the claim, “it isn’t enough,” “there must be more to the Gospel than the work of Christ.”

Salvation from sins and the promise of eternity with God is only found through faith in Jesus Christ. Anti-christs promise hope another way, through another religion. They acknowledge there is a God, even the Father, yet deny the exclusive claims of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man comes to the Father except by Me.” (John 14.6) They convincingly teach that there are many roads to God, choose one! This universalistic approach to God sounds appealing and less offensive than Christianity’s claims. It sounds “tolerant” and “loving” yet it denies the very truth that God the Father has made know to this fallen world. “He who acknowledges the Son has the Father.”

John writes to these followers of Christ to remind them that they need not be frantic over the unsettling nature of the confusion that began to abound in their fellowship. “You know it [truth], and that no lie is of the truth.” Christians need not fear that the convincing and manipulating ways of false teachers and religions will erode the security of their salvation through the One and only Savior Jesus Christ.

### **LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

- 1. Where can we find the only reliable source of Who Jesus Christ was?**
- 2. Who is coming into the world?**
- 3. What is the reason that God allows anti-christs into the fellowship of believers?**

- 4. What are the two effects of the false teachers?**
- 5. According to 2 Thess. 2, how do we know that the Anti-Christ has not come yet, but that we only know of anti-christs right now? What are some of the marks of his coming?**
- 6. Why can’t the salvation of an individual be diminished or denied by the effects of a false teacher?**
- 7. Are you trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation and not in a religion, teaching, another person or way?**

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**CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY**

Staff, Lobbyists & Capitol Community Welcome

Statehouse Room #44 ~ Wednesdays, 12:00