

# A 'CHRISTIAN' OR AN 'ANTI-CHRIST'?

Sunday, August 29, 2021 -- 1<sup>st</sup> JOHN series -- Msg 14 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

1<sup>st</sup> JOHN 2:18-27

English Standard Version (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.

## REVIEW :

- Ch1:5 is perhaps the central premise of the entire letter... ***"This is the message that we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that **God is light and in him is no darkness at all.**"***
- So far, the Apostle John wants us to know...
  - the reality and centrality of Christ in all things (1:1-4)
  - the perfect nature of God (God is perfectly GOOD.) (1:5)
  - the sinful nature of humanity (1:6, 8, 10)
  - the forgiven nature of those who are in Christ (1:7,9)
  - it is possible for true Christians to have Christ's victory over sin (2:1)
  - true Christians have true love for God and others (2:7-8)
  - those who hate others are not true Christians (2:9-11)
  - true Christians find all their encouragement in Christ (2:12-14)
  - true Christians do not love the fleeting world (2:15-18)
- Now, John soberly warns true Christians about the anti-Christ among them.
  - they are in every generation (2:18)
  - they ultimately and unwittingly serve THE anti-Christ to come (2:18)
  - they are seen for what they are when they leave the body of Christ (2:19)

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**Notice verse 26!** *I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.*

True Christians must realize the constant, insidious nature of Satan's seduction.

From the beginning in the Garden of Eden to end of the Last Days, Satan is anti-Christ!

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## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANTI-CHRISTS:

### 1) Anti-Christ DEPART from the fellowship of the true Gospel. vs 19

- They either grow up within the church or they enter the church but seek to sabotage it with their false teaching and/or their exaltation of themselves.
- They leave the church taking many deceived people with them and/or leaving behind great wreckage and confusion.
- Our sovereign God even turns the evil work of false teachers to ultimately purify His church from false believers. (see Genesis 50:20)
- Those who oppose the faith, simply abandon the faith or are not anchored in the faith **do not have real salvation**. (See for yourself in Numbers 16:1-35 and chapters 22-25; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Peter 2:1-9; Jude 10-13; Matthew 7:26-27; Mark 4:17; Hebrews 6:4-6)

### 2) Anti-Christ DENY the faith. vs 22-23

- Genuine saving faith is clearly marked by a right view of JESUS CHRIST... who He is, what He has done and His saving message. No one can be saved who is not trusting explicitly in the saving work of the Messiah in his sacrificial death and victorious resurrection.
- Genuine salvation requires embracing Jesus as God's Messiah (John 1:43-49) and it will be evidenced by obedience to His gospel teachings (see Mark 1:15; John 3:36; 15:10).
- Anti-Christ deny the Father and the Son by denying either one... no matter what they claim. (see Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:16; John 5:23; 15:23-24; 2 John 9)

### 3) Anti-Christ seek to DECEIVE the faithful. vs 26

- Sorry, that's just the way it is... and it's always been that way.
- The Bible is replete with this important warning. Take heed!  
Matthew 24:24; John 10:4-5; 1 Timothy 4:1
- The greatest protection from false teaching is knowing God's Word.  
Read it. Study it. Live it. Pray through it. Meditate on it. Memorize it.

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## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF TRUE CHRISTIANS:

### 1) True Christians ARE COMMITTED to the truth. vs 20-21

#### 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

**1** Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. **2** But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's Word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. **3** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. **4** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. **5** For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. **6** For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

### 2) True Christians ACCEPT the faith. vs 20-21, 27

- False teachers teach that you need more than humble faith in the true Gospel.  
(they add sensationalism, asceticism, legalism, mysticism, intellectualism etc)
- True Christians have the Word of God, the Spirit of God and the people of God.  
These are what God uses to grow and guard our saving faith.

### 3) True Christians REMAIN faithful. vs 24-25

- John knows that true sheep can never lose their salvation (John 10:27-29; 1 Peter 1:5).
- John also knows true believers will preserve in their sanctification. (John 8:31; 1 Cor. 15:1-2)  
We remain (*abide*) with Christ through 'the tough stuff' and become more like Him.
- Remaining with Christ both proves our faith and His promise -- **eternal life!**

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION/APPLICATION:

- 1) Is it possible that you are confused about what true faith in Christ actually means?
- 2) Is it possible that 'cultural Christianity' has been in place of true Christianity in your life?
- 3) What can you do to guard against being deceived by anti-Christ or THE anti-Christ in the future?