

Speaking of The Antichrist...

Ps. Craig Mobey

Scripture Reading 1 John 2:18-23 (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.”

Introduction

Let me say this at the beginning of this message, as God’s children, we are not waiting for the Antichrist; we are waiting for Jesus.

Although there is tremendous curiosity over end-time events that point to the immanence of the second coming, John, who wrote 1 John somewhere between 85 and 95 A.D., reminds us that we are already in the last hour or last time, as some translations put it. The idea of a last hour/time 2000 years ago is interesting. Some that it refers to the end of the apostolic age, some speak about a dispensation of grace and mercy and others speak of a difficult, dangerous and miserable time. Standing out for me though is the fact that the affairs of this world are being wound up and the return of Jesus is immanent.

In verse 18, John, on the one hand, says that many Antichrists have already come and gone. On the other hand, we are told that *the – the final and ultimate Antichrist –*

is still to come. So, how do we identify *this* Antichrist, is he already alive? Is he already in power? From which country will he come from?

Body

The word “anti” is a prefix and as such, its task is to modify the word that it is coupled to. “Anti” has 2 meanings:

1. Instead of or a substitute.
2. Against.

On 9 August this year, our Sunday message was about false teachers, and one of the characteristics of a false teacher was the denial of the deity of Jesus Christ or teaching a different Jesus. On this note, “Antichrist” in Greek is “*antichristos*,” meaning an opponent of Christ.

Indeed, John, in verse 22, tells us who the Antichrist is, “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, John clarifies that if you deny Jesus, you deny the Father, because they are one.

The Antichrist rejects this unity in that he will deny that Jesus is the Christ; fully God and at one with the Father. The Antichrist is the ultimate representation of what it means to go against Christ and will instead claim to be Christ, even having supernatural power and global influence.

Further on, in 1 John 4:2, we read, “By this you know the Spirit of God and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.” God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are one. There is unity between the Three who are One. Deny Jesus, you deny the Father. Confess in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 reads, “Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.” The Antichrist is going to seek world domination and will try to destroy all followers of Jesus. Part of this process will be to cause people to either abandon the

faith or to corrupt solid Christian doctrine to twist the Word and twist the pathway of salvation. There is going to be a total onslaught of false teachings. Are you seeing any of this in the world yet?

Let me briefly explain. Revelation chapter 13:1-10 describes a beast from the sea with 7 heads and 10 horns and on its head, there are blasphemous names. The dragon gave it its power. Noticeably, the beast had a healed mortal wound and this beast set itself in opposition to Christ.

Let's move on to verses 11-17, the 2nd beast, the false prophet. It has 2 horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon. This signifies a religious role. The false prophet will appear to be Christ but speak like Satan. The 2nd beast will support the 1st beast, claiming power from the 1st beast and ... Satan.

The 2nd beast will cause the inhabitants of Earth to worship the 1st beast ... and the 3rd part of the un-holy trinity is in place: Satan, an Antichrist and a false prophet.

Some scholars believe that the Antichrist will come from a confederation of 10 nations or a reborn Roman Empire. Or a Jew so that he can claim to be the Messiah. The Bible does not specifically state the ethnicity or nationality of the Antichrist.

Returning to the Antichrist, there has been much speculation over who the Antichrist is. Some common suggestions are Vladimir Putin, the Pope, Prince William and Donald Trump. All of these are the speculations of our time. In reality, though, many other candidates have been identified over history, Luther thought that the pope was the Antichrist, while many believed that Hitler was the Antichrist. We don't know with certainty who the Antichrist is – perhaps he has been born; perhaps he must still be born. Having said this, there will be no doubt as to the identity of the Antichrist when he appears.

But we do know that the spirit of the Antichrist is already in this world (1 John 4:3) and so we once held solid orthodox Christian doctrine being opposed:

- Postmodernism and postfoundationalism are calling into question “truth” and “reality.”
- Social constructivism is making decisions of the validity of portions of Scripture and how others should be determined.

- The deity of Jesus Christ is being called into question.
- The virgin birth is being called into question.

And more.

Conclusion

I need to once again state that as Christians, we are not waiting for the Antichrist, we are waiting for Christ. Although the Antichrist together with many other signs will go ahead of Jesus' return (and are already happening), we always look Jesus and through the lens of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, Son of God and our Saviour, we interpret the world around us.

We, as John clearly states, know the truth because we know and belong to Jesus and our salvation is sealed by the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth (John 16:13). It is ours to rather constructively grow in Him than to commit valuable time to speculation. Know the truth and evaluate all that is happening in this light.

We don't know the date and time of Jesus' return, but we do know that He is coming and our work here is not yet done. Therefore, continue to, in the power of the Holy Spirit, make disciples; be a faithful witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's be vigilant and remain faithful so that we do not become deceived. Help others to find Jesus. Hold on! He is coming again.

Amen.