

# Antichrists are Here

1 John 2:18-27

**MPS** Abiding in Jesus Christ guards one against deception to remain faithful and live ready for His return.

**OBJ** Every person can understand how to live ready by four recognitions.

## READ 1 John 2:18-27

*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. <sup>19</sup>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. <sup>20</sup>But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. <sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. <sup>24</sup>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. <sup>25</sup>And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.*

*<sup>26</sup>I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. <sup>27</sup>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. **1 John 2:18-27***

**Today's sermon begins with some bad news.** The Antichrist is coming, for which one must be prepared. And that is surely bad news. But that's not the bad news we begin with today. We know there will arise one who will become The Antichrist, and that there is only one Antichrist. But today's really bad news is that innumerable antichrists are already here. There are many who want to be him and actively serve him, who are glad to willingly plan the "devil's advocate". And one way we know that the time for The Antichrist to come is near is the prolific rise of the many who want to be him, antichrists.

**What does all this mean?** John states, "Therefore we know that it is the last hour." (18b) We live in the "last hour". John is not speaking of chronology, but in culmination of redemptive history by the Lord Jesus' second coming. He writes to strengthen Christ-followers to remain faithful in the days they live as they await Christ's return. His regard is not for time, in the sense of knowing dates and such, but for prioritizing the kingdom of God and eternity in the moment in which we live. Many get consumed with searching for what God has ordained not to tell us, 'when' He will return. But the Bible states over and over what John tells us here, we are in the "last hour". Following the Lord faithfully is not about being on time for a "scheduled appointment", but being ready, fully prepared for that appointment at its promised arrival. [Living ready every day prioritizes Jesus' promise to return while we trust to wait and watch for Him.](#)

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**INTRO** Have you ever had an "ah ha!" moment where you recognize something, and because of that recognition you see everything differently?

- Its fun to watch babies have these moments. Toys are designed for this.
- Its sad to see grown people repeat the same mistakes or poor decisions because they never have these.

When we become true followers of Jesus Christ, His Holy Spirit inhabits us to illumine all truth for us, and guard against the lies of the Evil One to live faithfully for Him.

**OBJ** Four Recognitions prepare a Christ-follower to trust in Jesus daily as you live ready.

Trusting in God is "turning the lights" on for life!

**1. Recognize WHO is present and How to prepare. .18c, 9-20**



...so now many antichrists have come. ...<sup>19</sup>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. <sup>20</sup>But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.

John clarifies who it is that they must guard against, the many antichrists who are now here. While recognizing that there will be one who will come, there are many that are already present. "Antichrists" remains a broad label John uses here. But the distinguishing characteristic is that they aim to influence others away from believing in, trusting, and obeying Jesus Christ. Their influence can be in teaching, but also in encouraged actions. Unbelief and apostasy are always functional before it becomes confessional! People live out their unbelief before they confess it, if they ever get to the point where they will confess it. And they want others to come along with them, to validate them and make them appear more impressive. But even more shocking than the surprise of their presence is where they come from; they come from among us!

**ILLUS** Does anyone remember the deconstruction phase among evangelical Christianity just a few years ago? I do. I also remember those leaders who were marketing their "deconstruction kits" to help others walk away from the Jesus. This is the exact kind of thing that John is calling on true Christ-followers to recognize.

**John explains that God is the One who enables us to recognize them.** Their going out from among us means that it "become plain that they all are not of us." And so we acknowledge what God reveals for us. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us." He clarifies that these are not people who lost their salvation. They were never saved to begin with. A great amount of what appears as apostasy is really just false adherence to begin with, and not true conversion. This is why a person's character is always the interpretive factor in understanding their words, to look for the fruit their life produces to understand their true confession. **Christ-follower, recognize that antichrists are far more likely to be fine, upstanding, moral people who look and sound so very similar to a Christian but knows nothing of the life by faith that makes one a real Christ-follower.**

**TRANS** God not only enables us to recognize who these people are, but He gives us the truth to discern their lies.

### **2. Recognize truth from Holy Spirit to discern lies of the times. .21-23**

<sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

John reminds the reader that they already know the truth, and that the truth is trustworthy because there is no lie in it. The truth we have in Jesus is the only truth there is. What confidence we have, not because of us but because of the One who is for us! And we are given the exact content of the liar's lie; they deny that Jesus is the Christ, as well as the Father and the Son. So the antichrist denies the truth of Jesus as God who became man to become the sacrifice for our sin before God. And they deny the deity of both the Father and the Son. **In short, they deny every primary doctrine that establishes the gospel as good news from God!**

**The recognition of truth is principally known by one's lies and denials, fueled by the antichrist spirit, or confession of Jesus, empowered by Holy Spirit.** Of denials, John clarifies that anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father, but the One who confesses the Son does have the Father. The only way to know God is by His Son, Jesus Christ, a confession that is only empowered by Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the only One you need to know the Father. Antichrists are those that make denials about Jesus Christ, no matter how small, inconsequential that try to make them. What one claims to believe in Jesus is of first order. And how they live to follow Him by faith in obedience is the final judge. Words are cheap when actions do not align. The Spirit of Jesus Christ illumines the truth of God's Word within to empower us to walk in the light of truth. **Recognizing truth from lies is determined by understanding the spirit that controls the person as they follow.**

**TRANS** In contrast to those that try to "untie" the gospel by denials, John says the gospel is the very thing that holds us.

### **3. Recognize that you must hold to the gospel in the midst of these times. .24-25**

<sup>24</sup>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. <sup>25</sup>And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.



John, again, reminds his reader of the message heard from the beginning, the very message that culminates in the gospel of Jesus Christ. When this message abides in us, we know we are abiding in the Son and in the Father. Because Jesus is the only way to God, we know there is no abiding with the Father absent the Son. And this abiding is not temporary, but eternal life. The essence of believing the gospel to hold to Jesus is not its affect on you at first, neither how strongly you felt about it, how high you leapt because of it, nor any other manner of how you acted. Rather, the essence of truly believing the gospel is not simply by its immediate affect upon you but its ongoing, lasting effect within you.

**Q? Christ-follower, are you holding to a message that more than affecting you continues its effect within you?**

There are many messages that take hold of us. But in time many of those messages are revealed as hollow, false, and even damaging and deceiving. But when we take hold of the gospel, in every test and trial we learn more fully and find ever more deeply that it has no limits nor bounds in its power; the gospel is the power of God unto eternal life! (see Romans 1:16) But you will only overcome as you hold to the message that has the power to hold you. Paul instructs Timothy, “*Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of that eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*” (1 Timothy 6:12) Tests and trials will come, Christian, because a life of following Him in this world is a war that you must fight. But whether you will be victorious is not in question, for in Him we have already overcome. **Christ-followers recognize that we hold to the gospel by abiding in Jesus because the gospel is the truth that holds us!**

**TRANS** As you abide in Jesus, He provides a peace and rest.

**4. Recognize God’s anointing to rest confident for eternity today by Holy Spirit’s presence. .26-27**

*<sup>26</sup>I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. <sup>27</sup>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.*

Do not be surprised when you recognize attempts to deceive you or lies that deceive are told to you. But neither should you ignore them. John reminds us that we must recognize what God has provided to equip us to live and walk in His truth, His anointing.

**ILLUS** I recently completed some security training on Social Engineering”. The training is to educate and raise one’s awareness of attempts of phishers to hack your computer. Their primary tactics are to appeal to your areas of highest sensitivity and fears to cause you to react before you think. The key to the training is to learn not to react but review the message fully prior to responding. Then, knowing the right response for each message.

Spiritual hackers who operate in the spirit of antichrist do the same thing; they appeal to you in attempt to trigger your fears and anxieties, and areas of life sensitivities to trigger you to react, action without thinking. But John teaches us to first recognize what God has provided and follow His Spirit. The word “anointing” here is not some mystical mental telepathy. No, it is the simple attentiveness to His Holy Spirit that resides within illuminating the truth of His Word that you’ve input so to shine the light of His truth on the dark attempts to deceive by lies. And where your resource is found insufficient, God counsels you to appeal you a host of counselors who WILL remind and help you in shining the light of His truth, applying His Word, to walk by faith in obedience to His command, the life of overcoming! **Christ-follower, recognize that God has given you His anointing to rest confident in life so you don’t have to react without thinking.**

**Q? Are you leaning in to God’s anointing by Holy Spirit and His Word, plus a host of His counselors? Or, are you reacting and running to the best help you can find in this world?**

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