

WHAT IS “ANTICHRIST”?

Introduction

- 1) Virtually everyone has heard claims about a present or future “Antichrist”
 - a) Books, websites, preaching, etc.
- 2) Is the word “antichrist” a Bible word? Yes, used five times in four verses, all in epistles of John
- 3) Many religious teachers today also claim to find an **antichrist** in the books of Daniel, 2 Thessalonians, and Revelation (claims made in the context of Premillennial doctrine)
- 4) What is the true Bible teaching about “antichrist” and how does it affect us today?

I) “Antichrist” in the Epistles of John

A) **1 John 2:18-23; 4:1-3; 2 John 4-11**

- 1) “**Anti-christ**” = *against/opposing Christ, usurping the place of Christ*
- B) Important details
 - 1) Warnings had *already* been given (1 Jn. 2:18; 4:3)
 - 2) Many antichrists had *already* come (1 Jn. 2:18; 4:3; 2 Jn. 7)
 - 3) Identification made possible by the *knowledge of truth* (1 Jn. 2:21, 24; 4:2-6)
 - 4) Identified by *false teaching* (1 Jn. 2:22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 9)
- C) Describes any spirit of error and rebellion against the truth and position of Christ
 - 1) Anyone who would rebel against God, fall away from the truth (apostasy), and teach false doctrine without repenting is manifesting the spirit of “antichrist”
- D) Fits into the context of the many warnings to Christians in the latter part of the first century about apostasy, false teaching, and rebellion (Acts 20:30; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Pet. 2:1-2; Jude 3-4)
 - 1) Not restricted to a particular time period – danger at any time! (2 Tim. 3:1; 4:3-4)

II) The Number of the Beast – 666 (Revelation 13:18)

- A) **Revelation 13** – Two beasts rise up, one from the sea and one from the land
 - 1) Symbolism connected to Daniel’s vision of the four beasts (Dan. 7:1-8)
 - a) Four kingdoms in succession (v. 17; same as Nebuchadnezzar’s image in Dan. 2)
 - b) Fourth beast represents fourth kingdom – Roman Empire (Dan. 7:23-25)
 - c) Some try to identify the fourth beast as a future “revived” Roman Empire and the “mouth speaking pompous words” as a future antichrist – false!
 - 2) Historical context of the book of Revelation identifies the sea beast as the Roman empire and the land beast as the pagan religion of emperor worship supporting it
 - a) Roman Empire was “antichrist” – **evil opposition and persecution** (Rev. 13:6-7; 17:12-14)
 - b) The number of the beast = the number of a man = **666** (Rev. 13:18)
 - i) **Six** falls short of the perfect and complete number seven, therefore 666 represents total imperfection and failure of man’s evil opposition to God and His people

III) The Man of Sin/Son of Perdition (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12)

- A) Best understood like the passages on the “antichrist” – **a spirit of rebellion and apostasy**
- B) Can be manifested in different ways at different times up until the end of time
- C) Behind every deception is Satan, who lies in wait to deceive those who do not love the truth

IV) Doctrines that are “Antichrist” Today

- A) Denial that Jesus *is God* and the *only way*, *latter-day* revelations, disregard for any part of the doctrine of Christ, doctrines and commandments of men, living ungodly and immoral

Conclusion

We should never want to act or speak in a way that could be classed as “antichrist.” Jesus said those not with Him are against Him (Matt. 12:30). Be **for** Jesus and obey Him today!