

Sermon: 1 John 2:18-29



Profile of the Antichrist

INTRO: Profiling and screening terrorists

- Trump's disputed travel ban to cut down on likely sources of terrorism
- Grandma thoroughly searched after 9-11 airport security clampdown to avoid accusations of racial profiling

The church also has imposters that need to be recognized, and those who aren't imposters need to be more sure of themselves.

Do you know how to recognize who is who without harrassing genuine Christians?

John gives us a profile with about 4 characteristics...

Antichrists & the Last Hour (v.18)



† **Last Hour**

- 2:17 “the world is being phased out”
- “period of critical change” (Westcott); “crisis” (ATR)
- Related in 2:18 to antichrists coming into existence
- Condition of history following the coming of Christ.
 - † No anti-Christ until there has been a Christ.
 - † Especially refuting Judaism.

† **Antichrist**

- Stands in opposition to Christ
- Or tries to take the place of Christ
- Does not “remain with” the Church (v.19)
- “Denies the Son” (v.22-23)

- First appearance of “antichrist” in Bible
- Only occurrence of “last hour” in the bible
- If you’ve read 2 Thess. Or Rev., your mind may jump to the singular world political leader, THE antichrist, but the context of 1 John indicates he is using it more generally of anyone throughout history who stands opposed to the truth about Jesus.

You have heard antichrist is coming (v.18)



† **Mark 13:5-23** NKJV And Jesus, answering them, began to say: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many... 21 Then if any one says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or, 'Look, *He is* there!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand."

† **Acts 20:29-31** NKJV For I [Paul] know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

Antichrists & the Last Hour (v.18)



† **Who specifically are “antichrists”?**

- Gnostics of John’s day,
- Donatist heretics of Augustine’s day,
- Pope of John Cotton’s day,
- Cults, Neo-orthodox, Secularists, other world religions of our day.

† **What can we do about it?**

- Study Bible so you can recognize Christian ideas from non-Christian ideas
- Be assured that the promised Messiah has come and focus on His leadership
- Stand up for the truth when anti-Christian people speak against Christianity.

2:19 They came out from us, but were not of us



- † There are non-Christians in church!
 - Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares growing together
- † It is a mark of a Christian to remain connected to the true body of Christ.
- † Often fakes are exposed by departure from church fellowship or a desire to start new groups without accountability.
- † Those who return are not antichrists.
- † **What can we do about it?**
 - Welcome Biblical leadership, teaching, and accountability in church.
 - Be sad when people leave, and pray for their salvation.
 - Fight fear, uncertainty, and despair with the knowledge that those who leave and don't come back were imposters from the start.

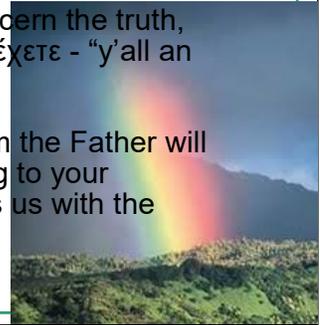
“Hence therefore ye may see, that many who are not of us, receive with us the Sacraments, receive with us baptism. receive with us what the faithful know they receive, Benediction, the Eucharist, and whatever there is in Holy Sacraments: the communion of the very altar they receive with us, and are not of us. Temptation proves that they are not of us. When temptation comes to them as if blown by a wind they fly abroad; because they were not grain. But all of them will fly abroad, as we must often tell you, when once the fanning of the Lord’s threshing-floor shall begin in the day of judgment. ‘They went out from us, but they were not of us; if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.’” ~Augustine

Augustine brings up particular cases: 1) The person who leaves the church but then comes back: such is not an antichrist. 2) The person who leaves the church but still claims to be a Christian. “Behold, they went out from us, and turned Donatists: we ask them whether Jesus be the Christ; they instantly confess that Jesus is the Christ... [but they have left the faithful whom Christ claims as His inheritance.] We hold fast Christ’s inheritance; they hold it not, for they do not communicate with the... universal body redeemed by the blood of the Lord.” 3) Those who confess Christ with their mouth, but deny Christ by their deeds “‘For they confess that they know God, but in their deeds deny Him.’ (Titus 1:16) ... Now therefore, brethren, if deeds are to be questioned, not only do we find many antichrists gone out; but many not yet manifest, who have not gone out at all. For as many as the Church hath within it that are perjured, defrauders, addicted to black arts, consulters of fortune-tellers, adulterers, drunkards, usurers, boy-stealers, and all the other vices that we are not able to enumerate; these things are contrary to the doctrine of Christ, are contrary to the word of God. Now the Word of God is Christ: whatever is contrary to the Word of God is in Antichrist. For Antichrist means, ‘contrary to Christ.’” ~Augustine

2:20 You have anointing from the Holy One



- † χρῖσμα = Anointing/unction – root of “Christ.” Represents influence of the Holy Spirit.
- † "That ointment which was poured on Christ above measure, descends to every member of His church, healing their wounds, softening and suppling their souls, cheering their hearts and countenances, and consecrating them to be kings, priests, and prophets to God... judging... fighting...praying... [and] preach[ing]... Every child of God even the least and meanest has received the unction of the Spirit." ~John Cotton
- † Every Christian has this unction, and should be able to discern the truth, not just the pastor. The subject is emphatic: ὑμεῖς χρῖσμα ἔχετε - “y’all an anointing y’all have”
- † This anointing TEACHES (v.27):
 - John 14:26 NKJV "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." (H.S. guards us with the Holy Scriptures against false teaching.)
 - So you know the truth (v.21)



•V.20 ends with “You all know” (or the KJV “You know all”) What is it that we know? If we go on to verse 21, it says that we know the TRUTH. This statement looks forward to the truth and, looking back, it is a reassurance that the gnosis/ knowledge which the Gnostics/antichrists claimed was a sham. It is the Christians who "know" and what we know is the "truth!" We won't let those antichrists shake us from the confidence that we're righteous because we know the truth!

•V.27 And the anointing which you yourselves received from Him remains in you, and you have no need for someone to be teaching you. But as His anointing is teaching you concerning everything--and it is true; it is not a lie--just as it taught you, remain in Him.

Just as emphasis was given on the fact that you heard the word from the beginning, emphasis is again laid here that you received the anointing. This anointing is "from Him" - from Christ, who, together with the Father, sends the Holy Spirit to believers.

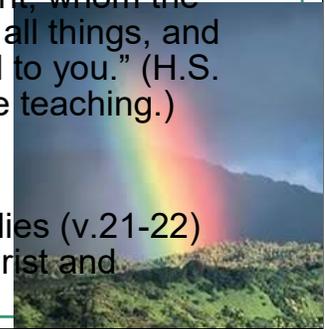
What does it mean that the anointing teaches us about everything?

- It's possible that the phrase "just as it taught you, abide in Him" is an explanation of "everything"--everything is taken care of if you'll just abide in Christ. Westcott wrote along similar lines, "The first teaching contained implicitly all that is slowly brought to light at later times... The Spirit...is ever bringing something more of the infinite meaning of [Christ's] person & work in connection with ... thought & observation”
- Clark connected it rather with the identification of antichrists--they do not need any further teaching to recognize the heresy of the Gnostics. Clark says the point is not that they don't need teaching but that they know enough to tell the difference between the true apostolic teaching and the lies of antichrists.
- John Cotton had yet another perspective, emphasizing the supremacy of individual conscience over human teachings. In his context of the Reformation of the traditions of the Roman Catholic church in the 1500's, the reassurance of the value of one's own spirit-anointed conscience was very important, especially when it differed from the authoritarian, yet human, teachings of Rome. Cotton goes on to say that we shouldn't implicitly accept the teachings of preachers or books we read, but should test them all with our anointing. This is because the anointing is "true and not a lie."

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 - So you know the truth (v.21)
- † **What can we do about it?**
 - Rely on the Holy Spirit’s presence and identify lies (v.21-22)
 - Guard against arrogance and isolation from Christ and Church.



•And yet, in the assertion of the accuracy of the Word and Spirit of Christ and their sufficiency to teach us, let us not jump from the ditch on one side of the road into the ditch on the other side. John is apparently writing to encourage believers whose confidence in the Gospel they originally heard is being shaken by false teachers. What that particular audience needed at that time was encouragement towards confidence in the Gospel so they could get out of that ditch of uncertainty and get back on the path. But if one of the false teachers read John’s letter, they might say, “Yep. Thought so. I don’t need anybody teaching me or holding me accountable. I’m gonna start my own church that isn’t held back by all these restrictive doctrines the apostles are writing about.” And you get guys like Muhammad or Joseph Smith writing whole new books to displace the Holy Bible. Such autonomous arrogance is the ditch on the other side of the road. Augustine framed it well in the sermon he preached on this passage back in the 4th Century, making the point that the fact that you have the Holy Spirit inside you teaching you does not mean that you don’t need any brothers and sisters in the church teaching you and holding you accountable, rather, the people of God and the Spirit of God work together to get God’s word through to you: “We can admonish by the sound of our voice; yet if there be not One within that shall teach, vain is the noise we make. Yes, brethren, have you a mind to know it? Have you not all heard this present discourse? and yet how many will go from this place untaught! I, for my part, have spoken to all; but they to whom that anointing does not speak - they for whom the Holy Ghost is not within teaching – those go home untaught...” ~Augustine

•If we are being taught by Christ's anointing, we are abiding in Him, and if we are obedient to His teaching, we will seek to keep abiding in Him.

Vs. 22-24 Denying vs. Confessing the Son



- † **These antichrists are teaching the lie that Jesus is not the Christ, the Messiah (v.22)**
 - Gnostics taught that Jesus was a half-god
 - Muslims teach that Jesus was a human prophet
 - Mormon doctrine teaches Jesus has a father, mother, and brother!
 - Hindus believe that Jesus is just one of many Gods
 - Oneness Pentecostals believe Jesus is one of many names for God.
 - Challenge those who deny Christ ("don't be mealy-mouthed")
- † **V.23 All who are denying the Son also don't have the Father; [the one who is confessing the Son also has the Father].**
 - 2nd half of verse not in any of oldest Greek manuscripts, quotes, or translations, yet logically follows.
 - God the Father isn't a Father without a Son! You can't have one without the other!
 - When we agree with and verbally confirm the great truth that Jesus is the Son of God, we receive the privilege of calling God our Father.

And what exactly is the lie being taught? These antichrists are teaching that Jesus is not the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God. Some Gnostics taught that Jesus was just one of a hierarchy of divine beings, but that is a lie. Jesus is God, and He is the Messiah who became man and took on himself the punishment for our sin. That's the truth!

•I have to take issue here with the modern English versions, for the Greek text states the lie in the negative, not in the positive. It says the liar is the one "making the declamation that Jesus is NOT the Christ." not that he "denies that Jesus IS the Christ" (emphasis mine). However, as is usually the case, the gist of the meaning is not lost even in this technical inaccuracy.

•Let us therefore zealously uphold this truth that Jesus is the Christ, and, as Cotton says, "don't be mealy-mouthed" (261) but call a lie a lie, as the Apostle does here--especially when people are denying Christ. Every non-Christian faith comes down in the litmus test of who Jesus is, and they all substitute an antichrist doctrine. However, our faith in the Son is linked to the Father--If Jesus is not the Son of God, the Father is not the Father!

23 All who are denying the Son also don't have the Father; [the one who is confessing the Son also has the Father].

•The positive converse forming the second half of the verse is not in any Greek manuscript dated before the 6th century, nor is it in the ancient versions (Old Latin, Syriac, Coptic), or quoted by ancient church fathers. That's why the KJV italicized it. The added phrase does not, however, add information which could not be deduced from the rest of Scripture, so it doesn't change anything.

•The Father and the Son are equivocated; they are the same in essence. To deny one is to deny the other; to confess one is to confess the other. Jesus is God, just as the Father is God--they are ONE!

•The antichrist, in denying the true nature of who Christ is, thinking he is exalting God (as the Mormons, Jehovah's witnesses, Hindus and Muslims do). But in doing so, they actually lose their claim to know the Father. Those of us who confess Jesus (Christians) by default have God also as our Father.

Vs. 22-24 Denying vs. Confessing the Son



- † These antichrists are teaching the lie that Jesus is not the Christ, the Messiah (v.22)
- † V.23 All who are denying the Son also don't have the Father; [the one who is confessing the Son also has the Father].
- † V. 24 What you yourselves heard from the beginning...
 - "Primary antiquity is a certain note of apostolic verity" ~John Cotton
 - What did they hear from the beginning? 1:1-the word of life, 2:7-the old/new commandment, 3:3-love one another
- † What can we do about it?
 - V.24b ...**keep in you. If what you heard from the beginning stays in you, you will also remain in the Son and in the Father.**
 - This is the only command in the passage.
 - "Think... talk... even sing about it... theology is not to be reserved until converts become mature" ~Gordon Clark
 - "keep... Heard... remain" = understanding, believing, obeying

•This confession *homo-logos* meaning "same word" is affirming a truth God has already set out, "speaking in accordance" with it. When we agree with and verbally confirm the great truth that Jesus is the Son of God, we receive the privilege of calling God our Father. And what a wonderful Father He is!

•John exhorts his readers to hang onto the teaching they had heard from the beginning rather than going after the newfangled doctrines of the antichrists. Cotton says (278) "Primary antiquity is a certain note of apostolic verity," and it's true. The good scripture of the O.T. had been with God's people since the beginning of time, and the apostles had taught good doctrine from the beginning of the church, and you heard the true Gospel and believed it from the beginning of your experience of Christianity.

•What had they heard from the beginning? John already says it was: 1:1-the word of life, 2:7-the old/new commandment, 3:3-love one another.

So what do we do with this information?

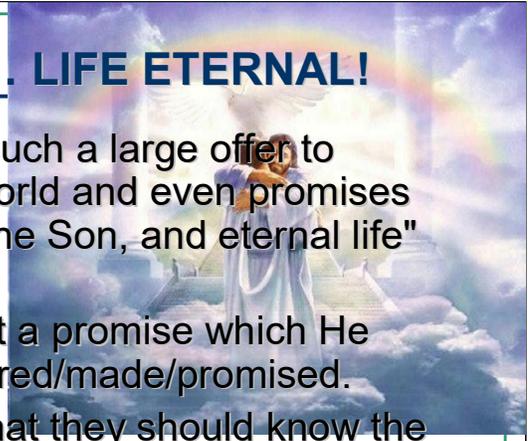
•Retaining this "primary antiquity" is the same as remaining in fellowship with God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. That's pretty crucial! How tenaciously are WE hanging on to the ancient truths of the Bible?

•Believers must "think about it, talk about it, and even sing about it... [for] theology is not to be reserved until converts become mature" (Clark 83). It should "abide/remain" in the believer all the time.

•What they "heard" from the beginning indicates more than mere hearing, but also understanding what the information means and responding to it positively so as to believe and obey it. The audience is not mere "hearers," but those in whom the Word of God, the love of God, and obedience to God's command exist and can therefore "remain."

V.25 And this is the promise... LIFE ETERNAL!

- † “Seeing that the world makes such a large offer to withdraw us... He outbids the world and even promises fellowship with the Father and the Son, and eternal life”
~John Cotton
- † Not a reward of good works; but a promise which He (Greek emphasizes “He”) declared/made/promised.
- † **John 17:3** "this is eternal life, that they should know the only True God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."
- † Keeping the ancient doctrines, being in fellowship with God the Father and God the Son, and having the promise of eternal life all go together.



- John Cotton wrote, “Seeing that the world makes such a large offer to withdraw us... He outbids the world and even promises fellowship with the Father and the Son, and eternal life”.
- Think of it... “life” “forever” – without death ... without diminishment ... always growing, forever vital, with eternal pleasures that never go away and will always give you joy.
- Eternal life is not a reward of good works; it is God's grace given to us by His promise (Cotton 280). It is given to us by Jesus Christ Himself; the sentence in Greek gives special emphasis to this (which the KJV and NIV ignore). Jesus Himself gave the promise.
- So, what is the "promise," and what does "eternal life" mean? The promise is defined in John 17:3, "this is eternal life, that they should know the only True God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (Sounds like an equivocal phrase for "abide in the Father and in the Son" from the verse above.)
- It all hangs together: Keeping the ancient doctrines, being in fellowship with God the Father and God the Son, and having the promise of eternal life all go together.

Summary: The profile of a Christian vs. a Fake



1 JOHN 2 CHRISTIAN PROFILE

- † Know it's the last hour (Jesus is Christ)
- † Holy Spirit is teaching you truth
- † Given the promise of eternal life
- † See Jesus as source of righteousness
- † Born of God
- † Practices God's righteousness
- † Remains with Christ's church
- † Holds fast the original Gospel
- † Confesses Jesus as Son of God
- † Has relationship w/ the Son & the Father

ANTICHRIST PROFILE

- † Doesn't see ascendancy of Jesus
- † Is a liar
- † Threatened with eternal death
- † Sees man as source of right
- † Sits under the Devil
- † Practices sin
- † Leaves the church
- † Leads others astray
- † Denies Jesus is God or Messiah
- † Does not have God's Fatherhood

So what's the profile we're looking for?

This is just a review of what we've covered here in these 11 verses

1. One of the first things to note is which profile you fit. If you don't fit the Christian profile, then I encourage you to turn away from what characterizes you as an anti-christian and begin organizing your life around Jesus, beginning with confessing your sin and trusting Him to forgive you.
2. If you have struggled with knowing whether or not you are really a Christian, notice how you match this profile and be encouraged, it's only the kind of people who DON'T worry about it that are not Christians.
3. And as this solidifies in your mind who the antichrists are in your life, realize that you are going to have to draw boundaries with them and not let them lead you away from Christ, but at the same time, can you think of these people who don't even have God as Father, as you would think of an orphan? Share the truth with them compassionately, winsomely so that they may know the truth, receive the promise of eternal life and know God as their Father.



1 John 2:18-29

18 Παιδιά, εσχατή ώρα ἐστὶ, καὶ καθὼς ἠκούσατε ὅτι [οἱ TM] ἀντίχριστος ἐρχεται, καὶ νῦν ἀντίχριστοι πολλοὶ γέγονασιν· ὅθεν γινώσκωμεν ὅτι εσχατὴ ὥρα ἐστίν.	2:18 [Dear ^{NIV}] Little children, it is a last hour [time ^{KJV}], and just as you heard that an antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come into existence [are there ^{KJV} /appeared ^{NAS}], by which we know that it is a last hour.
19 ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐξῆλθον, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν· εἰ γὰρ ἦσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν, μεμενήκεισαν ἂν μεθ' ἡμῶν· ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερο-θῶσιν ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶ πάντες ἐξ ἡμῶν.	2:19 They came out of us, but they were not out of us; for if they were out of [belonged to ^{NIV}] us, they would have remained [contin-ued ^{KJV}] with us; but [this happened] in order that they might be exposed [manifest/shown/plain], because [that ^{ENG}] they are not all out of us.
20 καὶ ὑμεῖς χρίσμα ἔχετε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου, καὶ οἴδατε πάντα ^{KB} .	2:20 Yet you yourselves have an anointing [unction ^{KJV}] from the Holy One, and you know all [the truth ^{NIV}].
21 οὐκ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἀλλ' ὅτι οἴδατε αὐτήν, καὶ ὅτι πᾶν ^C ψεῦδος ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας οὐκ ἔστι.	2:21 I do not write to you because you DONT know the truth, but because you DO know it, and because every lie is not out of the truth.
22 Τίς ἐστίν ὁ ψεύστης, εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀρνούμενος ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός; οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀντίχριστος, ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν.	2:22 Who is the liar, if not the one who is making the declamation that Jesus is not the Christ? [denies that Jesus is ^{ENG}] This man is the antichrist—the one who is denying the Father and the Son.
23 πᾶς ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν υἱὸν οὐδὲ [τὸν πατέρα εχει ὁ ομολογων τον υιον και TM] τὸν πατέρα ἔχει.	2:23 All who are denying the Son also don't have the Father [the one who confesses/acknowledges ^{KJV} the Son has the Father also.]
24 ὑμεῖς [οὖν TM] ὁ ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἐν ὑμῖν μενεῖο. ἐάν ἐν ὑμῖν μείνη ὁ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἠκούσατε, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν τῷ υἱῷ καὶ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μενεῖτε.	2:24 [Therefore] what you yourselves heard from the beginning, keep [let abide ^{KJV} /remain ^{NIV}] in you. If what you heard from the beginning stays in you, you will also remain [continue ^{KJV} /abide ^{NAS}] in the Son and in the Father.
25 καὶ αὕτη ἐστίν ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἣν αὐτὸς ἐπηγγέλατο ἡμῖν ^{AI} , τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον.	2:25 And this is the promise which He Himself declared [promised ^{KJV} /made] to us: the life eternal.
26 Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν περὶ τῶν πλανούντων ὑμᾶς.	2:26 These things I write to you concerning the ones who [seduce ^{KJV} /deceive] are leading you astray.
27 καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ χρίσμα ^{AI} ὃ ἐλάβετε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν μένει, καὶ οὐ χρειαίαν ἔχετε ἵνα τις διδάσκη ὑμᾶς· ἀλλ' ὡς ^B τὸ αὐτοῦ ^{OK3300} χρίσμα διδάσκει ὑμᾶς περὶ πάντων, καὶ ἀληθές ἐστὶ καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶ ψεῦδος, καὶ καθὼς ἐδίδαξεν ὑμᾶς, μενεῖτε TM ἐν αὐτῷ.	2:27 And the anointing which you yourselves received from Him remains in you, and you have no need for someone to be teaching you. But as His anointing is teaching you concerning everything—and it is true [real ^{NIV}], indeed it is not a lie [counterfeit ^{NIV}] ^{AI} —and, just as it taught you, you remain in Him.
28 Καὶ νῦν, τέκνιά, μένετε ἐν αὐτῷ, ἵνα ὅταν TM φανερωθῇ ἔρχομεν TM παρρησίαν καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνθῶμεν ^{AI} αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ.	2:28 And now, dear [little] children, stay [abide ^{KJV} /continue ^{NIV}] in Him, so that whenever He is revealed [appears ^{ENG}], we may have an open conversation [confidence ^{ENG}] and not be embarrassed by [ashamed before ^{KJV} /shrink from ^{NAS}] Him in His presence [at His coming ^{ENG}].
29 ἐὰν εἰδῆτε ὅτι δίκαιός ἐστι, γινώσκατε ὅτι [καὶ ^{AKC}] πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγεννηται	2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you should also be aware [know ^{KJV} /be sure ^{ESV}] that everyone who does what is right [practices righteousness] has been born out of Him.