

Today's Sermon: Warning Against Anti-Christ

Not to be confused with THE antichrist, John alludes to many antichrists that have gone out and were deceiving unsuspecting people. (2 Thess & Rev speak of a FINAL A.C. that will establish & break peace)

1 John 2:18–29 (NIV) *Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us—eternal life. I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him. And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.*

- **This IS the last hour.** John is writing this 2000 years ago.
- Some Christians have gotten tripped up by “last hour”. They insist John was referring to 70AD. We have discussed the problems with this view earlier.

A better way to look at this. We are in the FINAL CHAPTER. We have traversed God's Grand Story, navigated through Creation, Fall, Redemption and are looking to our FINAL Restoration –

- *We have seen God's unfailing love expressed through His Covenant Promises and we know WHO the Serpent Crusher is!*
- *We are living in the NEW COVENANT! Saved by Grace. Forgiven by the Blood of the Lamb. Empowered by the very Spirit of God.*
- *We await only... the RETURN OF JESUS – this time. Coming as a LION to rescue His people!*

John is now telling us hearers... we are in the LAST HOURS. STAY AWAKE. BE READY. BE ON GUARD.

- **MANY antichrists are moving around and spouting a FALSE GOSPEL.**
- **THEIR INTENTION:** to deceive and lead as many people as possible away from Jesus.
- In John's day, he said although some appeared to be a part of the Church – they never BELONGED TO JESUS or THE CHURCH.
- The HOLY SPIRIT has been given to ALL who believe in Jesus – part of the PROMISE of the NEW COVENANT.

In John's day the false teacher that was prevalent was named, “Cerinthus” who believed that the Christ Spirit is Divine, but only came on Jesus.

- Such teaching are still alive today!
- Gnosticism was also BIG during John's time. Where people were denying Jesus came in the flesh, but only appeared to be real.

These may seem like small matters – as long as we believe in “Jesus”. John, The Biblical authors seemed very concerned about false teaching, religious systems and deception creeping in.

A. Identifying Antichrist Religious Systems & Teachers

(1 John 2)...Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son.

Up until now, John has been helping us to identify true salvation, how to know if you are saved, he has alluded to false teachers, but hasn't called anyone out directly.

He finally LABELS these false teachers & their religious systems: ANTICHRISTS.

John's 1st Epistle gives us four tests of a False Teacher/Religious system. 1) examine them, 2) apply them to today.

Four Tests for Spotting Counterfeits:

1. Spirit Test: Spirit of God OR Anti-Christ spirit?

- **1 John 4:1–3 (NIV)** *Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*
 - ❖ **Acknowledges Jesus IS the Christ, came IN flesh, IS God. = HOLY SPIRIT!**
 - ❖ **Denies Jesus is the Christ, came in flesh, is God. = ANTICHRIST.**
- **1 John 4:5-6 NIV[5]** *They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. [6] We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.*
 - ❖ **Acknowledges God's Truth & Scripture as Authoritative = HOLY SPIRIT.**
 - ❖ **Denies/Changes God's truth & sounds like the world with it's values = ANTICHRIST.**

2. Teaching Test: Who is Jesus? God, Christ, Messiah, died & rose from dead, returning as Judge & KING.

- **1 John 2:22-23 (NIV)** *Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*
- **Matthew 24:5 (ESV)** *For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.*
 - ❖ **Teaches that Jesus is God, Christ, Messiah, came in flesh, died for our sins, rose from the dead, coming back to judge and reign for eternity = TRUE.**
 - ❖ **Teaches the Jesus is NOT God, DID NOT come in flesh, NOT die for our sins, NOT coming back to judge living & dead and rule as KING = FALSE**

3. Salvation Test: how are we saved?

- **1 John 4:14–15 (ESV)** *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*
- **1 John 1:9 (NIV)** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.*
- **1 John 3:23 (NIV)** *And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.*

- ❖ Teaches that Salvation is granted through placing our faith & trust in Jesus who died for our sins & offers us forgiveness for our sins and eternal life = TRUE
- ❖ Teaches that salvation depends on works, being a good person, scales & balances = FALSE

4. Fruit Test: Obey Christs commands, love others, grow in righteousness

- **1 John 2:9–10 (NIV)** Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble.
- **1 John 2:3–4 (NIV)** We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person.
- **1 John 2:15 (ESV)** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
- **1 John 3:9 (NIV)** No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.

B. Antichrist Religious Systems & Teachers Today

Three Antichrist Religious Systems:

1. Progressive Christianity: Uses the world to interpret the Bible = FALSE

- Spirit Test: God is a higher power – is present in ALL religions.
- Teaching Test: denies Jesus’ death as necessary for forgiveness of sin. Teaches world > Bible.
- Salvation Test: just love people, be a good person, seek truth and everyone will be saved.
- Fruit Test: changes biblical morality, redefines love, redefines peace (as niceness)

2. The World: atheism/naturalism/humanism – RELIGIOUS SYSTEM.

- Spirit Test: Who is God? SELF – you are your own God. Denies Jesus as God.
- Teaching Test: Jesus is an historical figure, not God. Denies biblical morality & righteousness.
- Salvation Test: Follow your heart, you only live once, do whatever makes you happy.
- Fruit Test: increasing sin/lawlessness, poorer mental health, more fighting each other.

3. Islam – “submission to god” – Muslim – “one who submits”

- Spirit Test: Denies Jesus is God. Allah is god.
- Teaching Test: Jesus was a prophet, did not die, not God, does not forgive
- Salvation Test: Works based – do the will of Allah as expressed in Quran
- Fruit Test: Sharia Law – oppressive, violent, conflicting, has produced much terror

CAVEAT: *This does not mean ALL Muslims do this. 1.6 billion Muslims. MANY want to live in peace. We are not judging each individual as much as the core teachings & fruit of the belief system. SAME for the other antichrist religious systems.*

Daily Mail, Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world: **September 11, 2001**, 2021 Biden & Afghanistan, Oct 7 Israel, AFRICA NOW.

2014, ISIS took over Iraq and Syria, BBC, “almost eight million people were forced into Sharia. Women were forced to wear full veils, public beheadings were commonplace, children were indoctrinated at school, and Christians had to choose between paying a tax, converting, or death.”

History shows these are not isolated instances; instead, this pattern has been happening since Islam's inception. (integrate, segregate, subjugate)

Am I suggesting every Muslim is like this? NO. I am suggesting the fastest growing religion is leading 1.6 billion people away from Jesus and towards eternal Judgement.

BIG LIE in Culture & Church: Islam & Christianity are basically the same. NO. They are NOT.

- **The Quran vs the Bible ZERO comparison.** From readability, historicity, contradictions, and core teachings. NO other religious text comes CLOSE to Scripture.
- **Jesus & Muhammad – POLAR OPPOSITES.**
- **Islam is growing in our universities and within our culture.** Growing FAST. Christians need to understand it, but more so, UNDERSTAND THEIR OWN FAITH so as to SHARE IT WITH THOSE WHO ARE UNBELIEVERS.

Melissa Dougherty posted recently, *"Our culture treats Christianity like it's Islam and Islam like it's Christianity."*

Why? And this is the point – BECAUSE the false religions, false teachers, etc. are ALL authored by the same being. Satan. They are ANTICHRIST.

- ALL three false religious systems mentioned above have common ground.
- They all tolerate each other and are intolerant towards Christians (and Jews).
- How does that make Any sense?

2 Corinthians 4:4–6 (NIV) The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

C. Guard against Counterfeits: Abide in Christ & Practice Righteousness

1 John 2:27-28 (ESV) ..But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is true, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him. And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

QUESTION: Are you a student of the Bible? Can you self-feed? Are you living for Jesus or the World? Are you stuck in sin?

****DO NOT PRESENT YOURSELF as 'low hanging fruit' for the enemy to deceive you.**