



# The Good News

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## Who, or What, is “The Anti-Christ”?

By Michael McCleary

There is a commonly held view among many religious people that one day someone called The Antichrist will come, begin the Apocalypse, and the end of the world will be upon us. Some say that time is upon us now, taking some of the prophecies from the book of Revelation and modernizing their interpretation.

Contrary to popular belief, this term is not found in the book of Revelation and is only found in the Bible four times: **I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; II John 1:7**. There have been numerous attempts by religious people to identify a single person as The Antichrist; some have pointed to Emperor Nero who, according to tradition, ordered the crucifixion of Peter and the beheading of Paul; others have pointed to Emperor Domitian who greatly persecuted Christians and may have been the one to exile the apostle John; still others point to sometime in the 300's AD when the first “Popes” of the Roman Catholic Church began. But what about the one who is supposedly coming whose arrival will mark the end of the world? Some suggest an evil dictator in the vein of Hitler will come along one day and fulfill this expectation. Is everyone else right in thinking that we should be on the lookout for him? Is he here now, or will he be coming soon? These are the questions that many ask. We now ask these same questions and consequently, we turn to the Bible for answers.

In **I Jn. 2:18** we read John's warning of the Antichrist. He says that many of these “anti-Christ's” are already in the world, and by that the brethren know it is the last hour. Of what last hour is he speaking? Obviously, it was not a literal hour, but rather the idea that these are the last days. The brethren needed to be strengthened and encouraged to stay true to the teaching of Christ because it would be attacked. Then, in **vs. 19**, we read, “They went out from us but were not of us; for if they had been of us they would have

*continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”* Who is the “us” about whom John is talking? These are Christians who are holding to the teachings of Christ and the apostles. The “antichrists” to which John refers came from the body of Christ and were, in fact, speaking against Christ, thus they were not “of” them (of the spirit of Christ). Turning to **I Jn. 4:1-3**, we see this term again used to describe Christians who had gone out into the world, falsely teaching that Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh. John writes in **verse 3** that “*this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard was coming and is now already in the world.*” Does this mean that the Antichrist was already in the world? No, the spirit of that which is “anti-Christ” was in the world. The lies being told of Jesus not being the Christ, and/or not having come in the flesh, were teachings about which the Christians were warned and of which they were to be aware. It was not a specific person, but any who had that spirit or mind, and taught those lies. In **I Jn. 2:22** we read that anyone who lies about Jesus being the Christ is “anti-Christ”.

So many are on the lookout for “The Anti-Christ” who will mark the so-called “End of Days”. They are incorrect in thinking that there will be one specific antichrist that will start the so-called “Apocalypse”. There were many antichrists in John's time, and there still are today, but only one spirit or attitude behind it which is not of God: the lie that Jesus is not the Christ, and/or that He did not come in the flesh. This indeed is antichrist and a lie; one to be corrected and fought. For on the truth of Jesus as Christ the Son of God, and that He came in the flesh, rests all our hopes and our assurances of a home in heaven with Him who died for us.