



The Good News

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Looking for The Anti-Christ

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There is a commonly held view among the religiously affiliated that the Antichrist will come, and the end of the world will be upon us. Many say that time is upon us now, taking many of the prophecies from the book of Revelation and modernizing their interpretation. They associate the Antichrist with the so-called Apocalypse in Revelation.

Contrary to popular belief, this term is not found in the book of Revelation and is actually only found in the Bible four times: I Jn. 2:18, 22; 4:3; II Jn. 7. There have been numerous attempts to identify a single person as the Antichrist, such as Emperor Nero who, according to tradition, ordered the crucifixion of Peter and the beheading of Paul. All of the popes have been declared by some as the Antichrist. Could any of these be enemies of Christ? Certainly. Would I call the pope an antichrist according to its most basic definition? Sure. But what about the one that is coming whose arrival will mark the end of the world? 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 that John is warning of the Antichrist, that many of these are already in the world, and by that they know it is the last hour. Of what last hour is he speaking? Obviously, it was not a literal hour, but the idea that these are the last days, and the brethren needed to be strengthened and encouraged to stay true to the doctrine 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 traditions of the Apostles. These antichrists 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 again that these are Christians who have gone out into the world, falsely prophesying 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 or was going to be? No, the spirit of that which is anti-Christ was in the world. The lies being told of Jesus not being the Christ, and 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 see 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 End of Days. They are wrong 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 behind it which is not of God: the lie that Jesus is not the Christ, and that He did not come in the flesh. This indeed is the antichrist and a lie; one to be corrected and fought. For on the truth of Jesus as Christ the Son of God rests all our hopes and our assurances of a home in heaven with Him who died for us.