

Antichrist 1

Presented in this series are articles that look in-depth at the worldwide apostasy shielding us from the deep things of God. Our heavenly Father speaks to us through scripture warnings, written by His holy prophets and apostles. They also show how biblical prophecies can be applied to our daily lives, fulfilled through the Holy Spirit.

According to some, the church will be raptured, the antichrist will come to power, and then an apostasy will occur, resulting in a seven-year tribulation.

But the scriptures describe these events on a different timeline:

(2Th 2:1) Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

(2Th 2:2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

(2Th 2:3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away (apostasy) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

In contrast to Christ, the Antichrist embodies the ultimate adversary. Christian tradition holds that he will rule with terror before the last judgment. In Christian eschatology, the Antichrist is identified as an individual foretold by the Bible to challenge Jesus Christ and attempt to usurp His position preceding the Second Coming. I can't look at the church today and believe they would follow such a person.

An apostasy will occur *before* the Antichrist appears. For the antichrist to be revealed, what kind of apostasy is required?

Let me show you what John wrote in 95 AD:

(1Jn 2:18) Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

(1Jn 2:19) They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

I've never heard anyone discuss this. The fact that there are antichrists is proof that we are living in the last days. The part that should get our attention is what he says in verse 19: **They went out from us! Us who? The Apostolic Church!**

Is this apostasy something we are waiting to see happen? Scripture tells us that the apostasy has already begun, and I cannot deny it. The apostasy began in the first century when church members rejected the apostles' teaching.

Because we know they came out of the Apostolic Church, we have a sense of what they believed. You see to be a part of the first-century church, especially during the days of the apostles, there were certain concepts one had to believe and agree upon.

(1Co 15:1) Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

(1Co 15:2) By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

(1Co 15:3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

(1Co 15:4) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

(1Co 15:5) And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

As stated in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5, the early church accepted:

Jesus is the Christ.

He died for our sins.

He was buried.

He rose from the dead.

He was seen after the resurrection.

In order to become part of the Apostolic Church, they had to believe these things. Eventually, they departed from the apostles' understanding of Christ. They did not agree with everything the apostles taught. Thus, the apostasy had begun!

Therefore, I think it's wise to just bring it all together recognizing that the apostasy would happen before the man of sin was revealed. Once he was revealed, he would continue until Christ's second coming.

Paul states:

(2Th 2:7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (restrains) will let (restrain), until he be taken out of the way.

(2Th 2:8) And then shall that Wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

Concerning the apostasy, John addresses two doctrinal points that define an antichrist:

(1Jn 2:22) Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

(1Jn 4:3) And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

As we move forward, we will pay particular attention to these two doctrinal statements. It is important to note that these concepts highlight the fundamental issues that distinguish true believers from antichrists. Denying the Father and Son undermines Christian faith, which centers on His role as Messiah and Savior. Similarly, not confessing that Jesus came in the flesh challenges the very incarnation of Christ. This is essential to belief in His redemptive work. Therefore, understanding and upholding these truths is crucial for maintaining Christian doctrine integrity.

Antichrist 2

In my study of the great apostasy prophecy to occur before Christ returns, I also recognize that it began in Paul's day and would last until the 2nd coming.

(2Th 2:7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (restrains) will let (restrain), until he be taken out of the way.

(2Th 2:8) And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

So, it's quite possible that people today, if they're not Bible students, if they're not paying attention to what God is doing and what God is revealing, it's quite possible some are in that apostasy now.

As John said, they went out from us. So this Antichrist apostasy was an apostasy from the Apostolic Church and will continue to the end. Some of us may have been in that apostasy our entire lives without seeing it because we were never taught anything different.

So, there are a couple of things I want you to hear. I will show you the scriptures and tell you the truth. You'll realize that people who do not accept the truth, as the scripture declares, carry that Antichrist spirit. The scriptural truth I will share is perhaps new to some of us. However, when you see the truth you will realize why those who cannot accept it possess the Antichrist spirit. This is what John warned.

John declared two events that both he and Paul believed were happening in their day: The beginning of the great apostasy and antichrists already separated from the apostle's truth. (1John 2:18-19).

Because John witnessed the apostasy, he defined two problems.

The first was a departure from the truth:

(1Jn 2:22) Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

(1Jn 2:23) Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.

Notice, the antichrist opposes Father and Son, but a liar denies Jesus is Christ. The Jews denied Jesus was the Christ but this is not an antichrist. This is a liar. Antichrist will accept Jesus as Christ but deny the Father and Son.

The second doctrinal problem:

(1Jn 4:2) Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

(1Jn 4:3) And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

To deny the Father and Son and that Christ came in the flesh puts one out of harmony with the apostles of Jesus Christ. Let me further define the problem.

The apostles understood Christ as the son of God. Christ wasn't role-playing, or assuming the title of God's son. In making Christ the son of God that meant there was only one God, the Father, who sent His son for humanity's salvation.

(1Co 8:6) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

(1Co 8:7) Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge...

The question we need to answer is, *when* did Christ become God's son? Paul says it happened in eternity past!

(Col 1:15) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

(Col 1:16) For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

(Col 1:17) And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Christ is the firstborn of every creature because he created every creature. Christ was *born* in eternity, not created. He is God's only begotten son. To deny his birth in eternity is to oppose Father and Son. The prevailing doctrine today that denies this is the Trinity.

The Trinity doctrine: There is one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A unity of three co-eternal persons.

Co-eternal means one was never without the other. In essence, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same age. How could a father and son be the same age?

Christ is the Word of God according to John 1:1.

(Joh 1:1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The word translated into Word is recorded in Strong's Concordance as G3056. It means a concept or a spoken concept. Christ was a concept of the Father brought forth to bring humanity into a right relationship with Himself. The Father's plan included the anointed one to set us free from all iniquity. God brought forth His son, gave him His spirit without measure, and sent him to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles.

Christ was born twice. In eternity past, then in Bethlehem. Note Jesus' statement to Pilate:

(Joh 18:37) Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. *To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

By giving humanity an infinite mind and free will, God knew iniquity would exist. Iniquity is twisted thinking. It is the thought before sin. He brought forth His son to testify to the truth. Not just the truth about God, but man. Christ died to free us from all iniquity. (Titus 2:14)

Jesus Christ is God's Son! The Trinity doctrine takes away God's love for us. God so loved the world that He gave them His only begotten Son. If the Trinity be true, God gave us nothing but a co-equal God. Greater is He that is in God's church than is He that the world believes in. Love will free us from all fear!

The next chapter will address the second problem of denying Christ came in the flesh.

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(1Jn 4:1) Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

(1Jn 4:2) Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

(1Jn 4:3) And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

I want you to give this some thought for a minute. Every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. Now, you know that a surface reading of that is not true. It is not enough for someone to believe and confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh to qualify them as a Christian. In what sense does it mean to come in the flesh?

(Rom 8:1) There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Walking in the flesh is the opposite of walking in the Spirit. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, did he understand God naturally, or did he acquire an understanding of the Father? In other words, we have him born in eternity past, then born in Bethlehem, where he became a human being. Did he carry with him all of his knowledge and understanding of God from eternity? If you are a Trinitarian, you must believe he did or the Trinity ceased to exist at Christ's human birth.

(Luk 2:52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

How could he increase in wisdom if he was equal to God? So, again, why does this matter? You'll see people painting pictures of the baby Jesus with a halo on his head. Why would you do that? Why would you think that he carried all of that understanding all his life? Why is it so difficult to believe that he became a man and *grew* in wisdom and understanding? Because believing as a Trinitarian, if that baby was born without divine understanding, the Trinity would not exist. There would not be a co-equal Father and Son.

This lie was already taught in the apostles' days. People in the church were separated from the apostles because of these two things: His birth in eternity and His essence as a man. Paul struck a deciding blow against these lies.

(Php 2:5) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

(Php 2:6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery (Something to seize) to be equal with God:

(Php 2:7) But he made himself of no reputation (emptied himself), and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

(Php 2:8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Even though Christ was in the form of God, He did not seek equality with God. He did the opposite. He emptied himself and took the form of a servant, made in man's likeness. By emptying himself, he started over.

(Isa 53:2) For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

This needs to be said again. It seems that we have lived in apostasy all our lives, and what we thought was true about Christianity is not true. It was Catholicism.

It is Catholicism that we were taught. In different aspects. Despite being separated from Catholicism, Protestants brought Catholic doctrines into their churches. They had Catholicism in their hearts. They believed in the Trinity. They believed Christ did not come in the flesh. The Protestants were all founded on Catholic doctrine. They didn't accept the Pope. But they all carried Catholic doctrine.

You see, now, how the apostasy began in the first century and will continue until Christ's second coming. The antichrist is already at work in all churches. God says, come out of her my people.

(2Jn 1:7) For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

(2Jn 1:8) Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

(2Jn 1:9) Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

(2Jn 1:10) If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

(2Jn 1:11) For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

You must see the truth about the Godhead if you want to leave the apostasy. You must realize the truth regarding God's son becoming a man. These are two essential concepts that need to be clearly defined so that we can dig into Revelation and see how redemption works. As a member of the last-generation church, I sound a trumpet of alarm: The day of the Lord is coming, for it is nigh at hand!