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Episode 3 - The Antichrist, Part 1

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Before the man of sin, there will come a great apostasy. By understanding the falling away, we can easily know the person of the antichrist.

In this podcast, we will show where the apostasy came from and what the spirit of antichrist refuses to accept about God.

We are continuing to dig deeper into the deep things of God.

Modified Transcript:

Scriptures are transcribed directly with notations. Refer to KJV for verbatim wording.

Hi. This is Scott Stanley searching the deep things of God in the Book of Revelation. That's what this podcast is all about- being able to make the Book of Revelation practical in our lives, and to be able to see how it is being fulfilled. So today, a major part of the Book of Revelation is helping us to understand that there was an apostasy before the man of sin is revealed.

I have been listening to a variety of televangelists talking about this, and they're looking for an apostasy to happen. Then, when this apostasy occurs, the man of sin will come into power, and there will be a 7-year tribulation. I want to approach this from a different angle. And what I'm going to show you, you can refute it if you want to, but what I'm going to show you is a plain, thus saith the Lord. And, again, if you can come to grips with this apostasy and the man of sin, you are making great strides in understanding Revelation because that is what the Book of Revelation is about.

So I can't wait to get into that with you, too, and to help you see that. But I want to begin in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, because this is where this apostasy and the man of sin are spoken of together, just in one place. We will look at another one here in a minute, too. Looking at 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul says,

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 you 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 in any means, in any way: for that day of Christ (our gathering together unto him) shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

This falling away in verse 3 is apostasy. This is the apostasy, and we can't get this confused or mixed up. The day of Christ doesn't come except there "come a falling away first, and the man of sin then be revealed." So the first thing that we need to understand is this apostasy, and I want to show you why as we read about the man of sin.

2Th 2:3 ... this son of perdition;

2Th 2:4 Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

So what he is writing, he has already explained this to those in Thessalonica.

2Th 2:6 And now you know what is withholding (or restraining) the son of perdition so that he might be revealed in his time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity is already working: only he who is now restraining him will until he is 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:

Now it goes on to talk about this man of sin and this whole thing going on. But I want you to understand, Paul said in verse 7, "*This mystery of iniquity is already working.*" It's already working. But something was restraining him. Well, now listen to me. The apostasy has to come first. So he says this man of sin, this is already working. Well, does that mean there was already an apostasy, because the apostasy had to come first? Well, I would like to ask you to turn to 1 John, chapter 2, and I want to share something with you. It's been here for 2000 years. I've never heard anyone comment much on this.

1Jn 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that the antichrist shall come,

Now there's a definite article before the word "antichrist," the antichrist. He said, "*As you have heard.*" So we know that this doctrine, Paul just said, "*I told you while I was there; I've already told this to you.*" And we know that the apostles were promoting the truth of last-day events. Look at how John puts this:

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

So, we know we're living in the end days because we see there are many antichrists, and we know that the antichrist is going to come. And again, Paul states, "*I've already told you this- there's going to be a great apostasy. The son of perdition will be revealed. Something or someone is restraining this son of perdition from coming to power. But when the son of perdition comes to power, he lasts until the second coming of Christ. Christ will destroy him with the brightness of his coming.*" 1 John, chapter 2, let me read it one more time- verse 18.

1Jn 2:18 Little children, it's the last time. And as you have heard that the antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists. So, see, that's apostasy. There are many antichrists, whereby we know it's the last time because it's the end of the world. This is what's supposed to happen at the end.

1Jn 2:19 They went out from us, ... Stop.

This is what has never been explained to me: "*They went out from us.*" Who went out from us? The antichrist's people. Well, who are "us"? John wrote this. He's talking about the apostolic church. The spirit of antichrist, these people who are antichrists, came out of the apostolic church.

Why didn't anyone ever share that with us? Is this apostasy something you are waiting to happen? According to the scripture, you can't deny it. The apostasy had already begun. Paul is saying this apostasy will happen, and then comes the man of sin, and by the way, we already see this man of sin forming, so there already had to be an apostasy. John confirms it. He literally uses the word antichrist, and he says,

1Jn 2:19 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, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Well, I hope you're finding this interesting because I would like for you to point me to someone who recognizes 1 John, chapter 2, explaining that the antichrist came out of the apostolic church. So, because we know they came out of the apostolic church, then we have a sense of what they believed. You see, to be a part of the church in the days of the apostles (to be a part of that apostolic church), there were certain things you had to believe and agree upon. 1 Corinthians, chapter 15. Read it carefully.

1Co 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received (you received what I preached), and you're standing in it. You're holding to the gospel.

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

Now, again, let's just stop here for a minute. He says, "*Of which you're saved.*" When we talk about this word "saved," what does that mean to you, to be saved? I was always told it meant God forgave me. He saved me, and I'm going to heaven, and yet, I want to read a definition of salvation from the Bible. This is in 1 Peter, chapter 1, verse 9.

1Pt 1:9 Receiving the end of your faith...

That word "end" is [G5056] in the Strong's. It means 'the result or the purpose.' Receiving the purpose, the result of your faith. What? The salvation of your soul. Look at it again.

1Pt 1:9 Receiving the completion or the purpose of your faith, which is the salvation of your soul.

So, when you bow your head and put your hands together and say, "Dear God, forgive me," is your faith complete? Is it perfected? In no way is it perfected. You know, if we could only face the facts of what Paul is writing to us in John and the New Testament, we would understand that there is supposed to be a growth in our faith- that we don't remain in just one place, but we keep moving in our faith.

Pro 4:18 The path of the just is as a shining light, it shines more and more to the perfect day.

The completion of our faith, the purpose of our faith, is the salvation of our souls. Now there's a Bible definition of salvation. So bring that back to 1 John, chapter 2, verse 18.

1Jn 2:18 Little children, it's the last time. How do you know? Well, we heard that the antichrist is coming, and even now there are many of them. There are many antichrists, whereby we know it's the last time. That's how we know the day we're living in, he says.

1Jn 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they're not all of us.

Then 1 Corinthians 15 again, for them to be in the church,

1Co 15:1 I declare unto you the gospel which I preached to you, you received it and you're standing in it,

1Co 15:2 By which you're saved.... What is saved? The completion of your faith... if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.

1Co 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I was told- this is what I was told, how that Christ died in behalf of our sins according to the scriptures;

So Paul is saying, I told you what I was told: Christ died for our sins according to the scripture. Next, verse 4:

1Co 15:4 He was buried, he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

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

1Co 15:6 After that, he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

1Co 15:7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

1Co 15:8 And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

Now stop. For them to be part of the apostolic church, this is what they had to believe. Christ died for your sins according to the scripture. He was buried. He rose on the third day and was seen. Can you remember those four things? 1) Christ died for your sin, 2) He was buried, 3) He rose, and 4) He was seen.

So if I took that over to 1 John, chapter 2, I see that these people who are antichrist came into the church believing what we just read in 1 Corinthians 15. But then they departed from that understanding. There's something that happened, something that they did not agree with that the apostles were teaching. Again, in 1 John, chapter 2, verse 19,

1Jn 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us. If they had been, they would have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

So, let's roll it all together before we go on. Recognize that an apostasy is going to happen before the man of sin is revealed. When the man of sin is revealed, he will continue to the second coming of Christ. The apostasy was an apostasy from the

apostolic church, if you can believe that! There was something then, that the apostles were teaching that these people disagreed with, and I feel like in 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, there's a very important statement Paul makes here.

1Co 15:3 I delivered unto you first of all. First of all, Christ died for your sins. He was buried. He rose and was seen.

That's "first of all." That implies something was coming after that, and I'm suggesting to you that what the antichrist people objected to was what came after this. They believed Christ literally came. They believed Jesus was the Christ. They believed he died for their sin. They believed he was buried, and he rose again. They believed that, or they could never have been part of the church. They had to believe that. But that was only the beginning of what they were taught. There was something more to come that caused them to walk away from the truth- to walk away from the teachings of the apostles.

Now, we're fortunate that John wrote what he wrote in 1 John because he tells you two things the apostles were teaching that they disagreed with. We find the first one in 1 John 2:22.

1Jn 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? ...

Well, the antichrists did not deny that. They accepted that Christ died for our sins.

1Jn 2:22 ... He is antichrist that denies the Father and the Son.

The word "antichrist" here in 1 John 2:22 has the definite article. "He is the antichrist that denies Father and Son." So somehow, the antichrist will deny Father and Son, but "*the spirit of antichrist*" is to deny Father and Son. We want to get into that, maybe in the next podcast.

But there's one more thing about antichrist. In 1 John, starting in chapter 4, verse 1.

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 you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ comes in the flesh is of God:

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

The apostasy was already happening. The spirit of antichrist will deny that Jesus came in the flesh. On the surface, that looks like they will deny that Jesus even came. No. They believe he came. They believe Jesus was the Christ, and that he died and was buried and rose again. They believe that.

So I'm saying there is something more to 1 John 2:22 and 1 John 4:3. There's something more to what the spirit of antichrist denies than meets the eye. We will get into this in the next podcast. And remember this warning in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you in any way: for this day of Christ isn't going to come, except there is an apostasy first, and that man of sin will be revealed, the son of perdition;

So, I believe it's possible if we can pinpoint what this apostasy is recorded by John in 1 John 2:22 and 1 John 4:3 (the two things that he's writing about), if we can identify what that is, we should be able to clearly see the man of sin who won't be stopped until the second coming of Christ. Let's consider what we've heard today. We will take this apart and see if we can't identify the apostasy- exactly what it is and who it is that teaches such things.

Heavenly Father, there is nothing like serving you. Nothing. We worship you. We worship you and thank you for your truth. We praise you for your character, who you are, and the hope we have of the glory of Jesus Christ and the glory of God.

I pray and ask that you bless this podcast and bless those who hear it, and that this podcast be sent out to as many as we can reach. All to your glory and our salvation. In Jesus' name, I always ask it. Amen.