

MY THOUGHTS ON THE ANTICHRIST

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This article was written to show the scriptures by which the Antichrist might be identified with an emphasis on examining ourselves to see if WE are also an antichrist. The following are scriptures on the Antichrist with commentary...

1Jo 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.

Note: Notice that the writer of this verse knew that there would arise a specific Antichrist at a specific time - the last time. However, he also said there are presently MANY antichrists. How are we to tell the specific one from the many?

1Jo 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.

Note: They (the many antichrists) went out from us. Who are 'us'? 'Us' refers to the original apostles who taught the original and true faith which we MUST be able to know and discern. Why? Because there are MANY who use this verse to say that the 'us' refers to their particular church which they believe is the only true church. And those who leave that church are antichrists. But what if they are NOT the true church? What if their church has been built upon men who already 'left' the original and true faith? You see how this verse can then be used to deceive people by those who themselves are deceived? It can also be used to intimidate sincere people, spiritually abuse them and threaten that those who leave this church are lost forever. This spiritual abuse can destroy their faith and relationship with God.

1Jo 2:20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

Note: 'Ye' refers to those who stayed with the original and true faith, not departing from it. John was writing to people whom he knew were in the true faith. The unction refers to the holy spirit which gives the true knowledge of God and of that true faith.

Foundational knowledge of being in the true faith has to do with how we may receive the holy spirit. We know that to receive the holy spirit, we must first be CALLED of God (Acts 2:39) who then leads us to REPENT of our SINS. (Rom. 2:4) We must KNOW what sin is in order to repent of it and depart from it. Then we must be BAPTIZED with LAYING ON OF HANDS according to God's instructions. (Mt. 28:19, Acts 2:38, 8:18) We also must be willing to OBEY God. and keep his commandments. (Acts 5:32) The holy spirit will then teach us and guide us as we continue in the faith growing in grace and knowledge.

1Jo 2:21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

1Jo 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.

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

Note: The apostle John was writing to those whom he knew had the holy spirit and the true faith, to those who knew the truth vs those who were departing and embracing lies of one form or another. The specific LIE is in DENYING that Jesus is the Christ.

To this day the Jews DENY that Jesus is the Christ although Messianic Jews do believe in him. Also the Moslems, who gained control of the holy land in the 600's AD, DENY that Jesus is the Christ. They believe that he was a prophet in a line of prophets culminating in Mohammed. But they DENY that Jesus was God's son. This denial is inscribed on the walls of their Dome of the Rock that sits on the temple mount in Jerusalem. Other world religions overtly DENY Jesus Christ - Hinduism and Buddhism for example. The religions which overtly deny Christ and are Antichrist we have no trouble identifying. But the scriptures show that CHRISTIANS can DENY Christ also. The following are scriptures that show how we need to watch for Antichrist within our own selves...

1.

Read the chapter of Jos. 24, esp. vs 27. After gathering the Children of Israel to hear him, Joshua recounted the deeds of the Lord among them and made them choose whom they would serve, the Lord only, or the gods they had known from before the flood and in Egypt. The people declared that they would serve the Lord. Joshua said to them that if they should forsake the Lord, he would consume them even after he had done them good. A great stone which Joshua set up by the sanctuary, he said, would bear witness to what they had agreed lest they DENY their God. (vs 27). This was the last thing Joshua did before he died. As we know, the Hebrew form of the name Jesus is Joshua. This chapter shows how we can DENY the Lord today by not living up to the same agreement or new covenant that we have made with him as Christians.

2.

Pr. 30:7-9 Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and DENY thee and say, "Who is the Lord?", or lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain.

Note: Here, denying the Lord is a spirit of self sufficiency which we must watch for coming from our heart. It is an attitude that no longer realizes how much we NEED God. It is brought about by a lust for and abundance of riches. (Compare Rev. 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked) If we are wise, we will ask that God will give us neither poverty nor riches, but sufficient so that we can maintain the right attitude of relationship with him.

3.

Mt. 16:24 Jesus was telling his disciples how he was going to go to Jerusalem to suffer and die. Peter, thinking he was saying the right thing, rebuked Jesus, saying, "This shall not happen to you!" But Jesus said to Peter, knowing that it was GOD'S WILL for him to suffer and die, "Get thee behind me Satan, for you savour not the things that be of God, but those that be of men!" Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him DENY himself, and

take up his cross and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

Note: Although Peter meant well, his wish to save Jesus from death was DENYING God's will and his plan of salvation. Had he succeeded in saving Jesus, Satan would have the victory. This is why Jesus said that his followers must deny themselves, for when we accept God's will we must deny our own will and bear whatever cross he gives to us (or to those we love) to bear even unto death. This is the ultimate test, whether we will DENY God or ourselves.

4.

Mt. 26:31-35 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad...Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shall DENY me thrice. Peter said unto him, though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

Note: We know the story, that later, Peter did deny Jesus three times as prophesied. Was he not at that point an antichrist? Yes, he was! Likewise, all the disciples forsook him in the hour of grief. Let us therefore fear to SAY with self confidence, "I will never deny you Lord!", but rather to ASK for the strength to acknowledge him in every situation that may come in life.

Also notice WHY the disciples deserted and denied Jesus. They were "offended". What was about to happen to their Lord was not what they expected. This is why the Jews denied Jesus. They were offended in him. What they expected was a great military leader who would save them from the Roman oppression. But the REAL MESSIAH often said and did the unexpected and unpopular. Therefore he was "despised and rejected by men". What if after accepting Jesus as our Lord and savior, our life does not turn out like we hoped or expected? Will we then become offended and come to depart from and DENY our Lord???

5.

Tit. 1:15-16 Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they DENY him, being abominable and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate.

Note: Here are people who actually profess and think that they KNOW God, but DENY him in their works because they do not obey his words or follow his example in how to live. Also churches who are preaching that works are not required, but faith only, are actually DENYING God and are antichrists.

The more we are zealous of good works, the more we are emulating Jesus and the Father. Here are some of the many scriptures which encourage and explain good works... 2 Co. 9:8-9, Col. 1:10, Ja. 2:26, Tit. 2:7,14, Acts 9:36-39.2

6.

2 Tim. 3:1-5 This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, (instead of loving God first) covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers (cursing or using God's name in vain), disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without

natural affection, trucebreakers (This word literally means without libation - the ceremonial pouring of wine in honor of a deity; the liquid itself. So in context this would mean making void the New Covenant or the blood of Christ to cover our sins.), false accusers, incontinent (This word has to do with not rendering due benevolence in marriage. See 1 Co. 7:5), fierce, despisers of those who are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but DENYING the power thereof: from such turn away.

Note: Here people deny God by having a "form of godliness" or practicing religion while at the same time exhibiting a whole array of evil traits and actions which DENY the power or authority of God. We need to examine and watch for these things in ourselves.

7.

2 Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers AMONG YOU, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even DENYING the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Jude 1:4 For there are certain men CREPT IN unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness (lawlessness), and DENYING the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Note: We see that antichrists were not only DEPARTING from the original faith, but in these scriptures we see that false prophets and teachers ENTERED IN TO the original faith, denying the Lord and corrupting the true doctrines and teachings even from the time of the original apostles. These are the "antichrists within Christianity" that are far more dangerous than those whom we can point to without.

You see from these scriptures how we can look within ourselves to see if WE are an antichrist.

* *We can deny the Lord by not serving him and living up to the New Covenant.*

* *We can deny the Lord by having a spirit of self sufficiency that we do not need him.*

* *We can think that we are so strong we would never deny him.*

* *We can deny the Lord by not accepting his will for our lives especially if his will is for us or someone we love to bear a painful cross.*

* *We can deny the Lord by how we live in neglecting good works which does not emulate the good example he set for us to follow.*

* *Finally, we can deny the Lord by having a form of religion and at the same time not submitting to his authority but practicing abominable things.*

1Jo 2:24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

Note: This refers back to verse 21 and includes the message of the true faith (which ye have heard) as well as the true holy spirit dwelling within you.

1Jo 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.

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

1Jo 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.

2Jo 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.

Note: The specific Antichrist has often been identified with the Man of Sin of 2 Thes.2. In all the scriptures which have to do with Antichrist, I have found none that particularly connect him with the Man of Sin. But there may be a connection between the False Prophet mentioned in Rev. 19:20 and the Antichrist because of the words 'false prophets'.

Another thought concerning this verse is that when it was written, the philosophy of Gnosticism was extant. This philosophy holds that anything spiritual is good and anything physical is evil; hence the admonition to try the spirits because it is not true that anything spiritual is good.

Notice the two specific doctrines that will identify an antichrist. An antichrist will (1) deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (the same flesh that we have), and/or (2) deny that Jesus is the Christ. (1 Jo. 2:22). We must therefore watch from within and without for anyone bringing any form of these two doctrines.

The name Jesus signifies "savior". It is the Greek form of the name Joshua. The name Christ in the New Testament is equivalent to the Hebrew Messiah which signifies "anointed". Jesus was both priest and king. Among the Jews, priests were anointed in their inauguration to their office. (1 Ch. 16:22) To deny that Jesus is the Christ is to deny that he was the promised Messiah, the savior of all mankind, the only name by whom we can be saved.

The following are scriptures having to do with Jesus Christ coming in the flesh:

Jo. 1:1,14 In the beginning was the WORD, and the word was with God, and the word was God. And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

1 Ti. 3:16 GOD was manifest in the flesh. (Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, was GOD manifested in flesh.)

Rom. 8:3 ...God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh...

Php. 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Heb. 2:9,14,17,18 But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death...forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death...wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest..., for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Note: These scriptures show how Jesus Christ, then called the Word or Spokesman, existed with God the Father even before the world existed until God sent him to be begotten and

born into the world. He was born with the same flesh that we are all made of from a human mother who also had the same flesh. He was subject to temptation (with option to choose to sin or not), suffering, and death. Any doctrine that denies this is antichrist. The doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception", for example, which the Catholics teach, does deny this and therefore is an antichrist doctrine. According to their doctrine, Mary was preserved from "original sin" from the womb of her mother, St. Anne. (Of course, this story cannot be found in the Bible, nor are the words "original sin" found in the Bible.) Therefore when she conceived Jesus, she passed on this sinlessness to him so that he was supposedly "unable" to sin. The truth is that he was as able to sin as any of us. He had the same human nature as we do. The Bible calls it the law of sin and death (Rom. 7:22-25,8:1-3) (not original sin) in him. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15)

The idea of Gnosticism was that man was a divine spirit trapped in a corrupt material world and in need of a special 'knowledge' (gnosis) in order to escape. "Christian" gnostics held that the supreme God had emanated lesser gods, including one that created the material world and trapped our spirits in it. "The Christ" was a good divine being working to undo the damage done by the evil creator-god. This Christ came on the man Jesus temporarily and abandoned him just before his death.

Also there was the doctrine of docetism which regarded the sufferings and human aspects of Christ as imaginary or apparent instead of being part of a real incarnation. The basic idea of docetism was that if Christ suffered, he was not divine; and if he was God, he could not suffer. Paul affirmed that Jesus combined the two natures. He was the Son of David according to the flesh and Son of God. Rom 1:3-4.

Look at the words JESUS CHRIST CAME IN THE FLESH. On one side of the "equation" are the words "in the flesh". On the other side of the equation is the word Jesus Christ. Jesus was also named Immanuel (meaning God with us) by God the Father so his name signifies GOD as well as savior. So on the one hand, an antichrist might manufacture doctrines that deny his nature in the flesh. On the other hand, an antichrist might manufacture doctrines that deny his existence as GOD. Some ministers have recently said that Jesus Christ was 'not wholly God' while he was in the flesh. However, two scriptures, Mt 1:23 and 1Ti 3:16 prove that he was God while in the flesh.

There are churches teaching today that Jesus was a created being. This is also an antichrist doctrine because it denies that Jesus was God.

We must watch for ANY WAY in which we might deny our Lord, for he says: (2Ti 2:12) If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we DENY him, he also will deny us; and again in (Mt 10:32-33), Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall DENY me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

The opposite of denying our Lord is to be diligent to acknowledge him in every way in our lives, by our true knowledge of him, our true love and service to him and seeking his will. Let us

therefore watch not only for someone out there in the world whom we might point to as the Antichrist, but watch our own hearts so that we will not be antichrists ourselves.