

## Doctrine the Anti-Christ: My Answer

“In essentials, unity,  
In non essentials, freedom.  
In all things, love.”

### Concerning the Antichrist

**Question.** “*Pastor Stan, do you believe in the antichrist.*”

**Answer.** “*Indeed I do and for the following biblical reasons.*”

1. The term “*anti-Christ*” is a biblical term. It is used by the apostle John in his writings.

- *1 John 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.*

Notice that John teaches “*the last time*” was in existence during his generation over 2000 years ago.

When people say we are living in the “*last days*” they are saying something that is true *but has been true* for the past 2000 years according to a biblical usage of the words. Therefore, no undue alarm should be associated with these words. The Christian is to wait patiently for the coming of the Lord.

- *1 John 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.*
- *1 John 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.*
- *2 John 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.*

In these three passages John identifies an anti-Christ as a “*liar*”, one who denies *that “Jesus is the Christ”*, and one who denies that Jesus has “*come in the flesh*”. An anti-Christ is a person who teaches a false doctrine with particular emphasis against the incarnation or the virgin birth where by God was made manifest in the flesh (John 1:1, 14).

2. Because the *Bible* limits the usage of the term anti-Christ, so do I, in my own understanding by way of *interpretation* or explanation. I do not want to go beyond what the *Bible* allows.

3. Having said that I do recognize the fact that many Christians have found (or taken) the liberty to make a larger *application* of this term to individuals in the *Bible* who are certainly very bad people.
4. For example, in the book of the *Revelation* TWO personages are presented and BOTH are called a “*beast*.” (Revelation 13:1, 11). Does anyone know who at least one of the “*beast*” is? Perhaps for JOHN was told and thus HIS generation was told the number of someone living 2000 years ago was the number of a man and his number was 666.
  - *Revelation 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*
  - *Revelation 13:11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*
  - *Revelation 13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

Keep in mind the book of the *Revelation* was written to a specific group of people IN THE FIRST CENTURY in Asia Minor, “*to the seven churches*”.

- *Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;*

Keep in mind John was told HE would be shown things that would SHORTLY come to pass (Revelation 1:1) for “*the time is at hand!*”

- *Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

Keep in mind that words have meaning and when John was told something was going to happen SHORTLY in HIS day and time it did NOT mean 2007 down the road.

So was there a “*beast*” of a man representing a great empire (like Rome) that was hurting Christians? The answer is yes and his name was Nero. The persecuting, pagan Roman Empire was headed in the AD 60s by Caesar Nero, whose name just happened to add up to 666 in the Hebrew system of letters and numbers. In Hebrew, “Caesar Nero” = “NRWN QSR” = N 50 + R 200 + W 6 + N 50 + Q 100 + S 60 + R 200 = 666 (A variant spelling of the name, NRW QSR, adds up to 616, which some manuscripts have in place of 666).

Did the Lord want John or the church to be afraid of the “*beast*”? No for in the vision John sees IN THE NEXT VERSE AFTER THE NUMBER OF 666 being given the LAMB which can only be the LORD JESUS CHRIST standing ON THE MOUNT ZION AND WITH HIM AN 144,000 who are SEALED IN THEIR FOREHEADS. *Revelation 13:14 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

Why does no one ever talk about GOD marking in the FOREHEAD those who belong to HIM?

Are the TWO beasts of *Revelation* TWO MORE antichrists? Indeed they are by way of APPLICATION.

Certainly bad men like NERO opposed God in John’s day where the book of the *Revelation* should mainly remain by WAY OF INTERPRETATION.

I have been asked if I believe the *Bible*. That is a good question.

My answer. “*Absolutely*”.

I have been asked if I believe every word in the *Bible*. That is a good question.

My answer, “*Absolutely. Every word and every LETTER is important. One of the greatest doctrinal teachings of the apostle Paul hinges on a single letter—and that doctrine should be understood if the Christian faith is to be defended*” (*Galatians 3:16*).

Now I have some questions.

“*Does God keep HIS word?*”

*Does God keep His word ON TIME?*”

“*Did God keep His word to John and to the SEVEN CHURCHE OF ASIA in the first century?*”

“*Did the events that John was told was going to happen SHORTLY happen shortly?*”

**I BELIEVE THEY DID!  
I BELEVE GOD KEPT HIS WORD TO JOHN  
AND TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA!**

Now I invite others to believe with me in God’s Word too and study afresh a message of hope and encouragement to the church of the FIRST century by way of INTERPRETATION but with much practical APPLICATION today once the great themes of Revelation are understood. The first theme is that any religion which hurts the church shall be destroyed.

The second theme is that any political entity that hurts the church shall be destroyed. God will avenge His saints.

There is much more that could be said about the rise of anti-Christ of whom John said there are MANY. I would like to offer one more example by way of application of this term.

5. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3 there is a personage presented called the “*man of sin*” who is certainly another “*anti-Christ*” by way of applying the biblical term to him.
  - *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*
6. Who is this “*man of sin*”? One possible candidate would be a man named John Levi of Geschala during the seize of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Josephus, ii: xxi: 1). What an interesting man he was. Some day, if anyone likes, his story can be told and what he did to mislead the Jews and present himself as a false messiah.
7. Another possible candidate for the “*man of sin*” is to take the position of the Reformers or those who are our Protestant forbearers.
8. It was a very common understanding that the “*man of sin*” refers not to just one person but a representative person who holds an office IN THE CHURCH (called the “*temple*” in 2 Thessalonians 2:4).
  - *2 Thessalonians 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*
9. Many leaders of the Reformation leaders, including the Baptist, asked a question. “*Is there a person ‘Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God’ (2 Thessalonians 2:4)?* The answer was, “*Yes! There is such a person!*”
10. Many Protestants understood that the GREEK word “*anti*” can also mean “*for*” or “*instead of*”! In other words this particular “*anti-Christ*” of 2 Thessalonians is not outside the church but INSIDE the church and says he is here INSTEAD of Christ! Was there, is there someone or a group of someone’s who say this? Indeed there is: the POPE (S).
11. Armed with this reasoning our spiritual heritage reflected in the *Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689* says this about “*anti-Christ*”.

## CHAPTER 26

### OF THE CHURCH

Paragraph 4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

- *Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*
  - *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
  - *Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*
  - *2 Thessalonians 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. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 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: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*
12. Since the Middle Ages there has been many powerful Protestant voices declaring the papacy is the anti-Christ organized. The voices include those of Dante, John Wycliff, John Huss, and Savonarola. During the Reformation men such as Martin Luther, William Tyndale, John Calvin, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, John Bradford, and John Foxe denounced the papacy. In the 17th and 18th centuries, by John Bunyan, the translators of the King James Bible, and by the men who published the *Westminster* and *Baptist Confessions of Faith*; Sir Isaac Newton, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, John Wesley added their voices. In more recent times, Charles Spurgeon, Bishop J. C. Ryle and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones have all said the papacy IS antichrist.

13. Personally I find the reasoning compelling enough to be concerned about any man who sits in the Christian church and says he is here in place of Christ.

14. “*Do I believe in the antichrist*”?

Indeed I do and if Jesus were to return to day one of them would be able to be *named* and dealt with!

However, I do want to be careful with Biblical language and with God’s *Word* and so I am cautious to stay very close to the *Bible* first by properly interpreting or explaining it then by embracing an application reflected in the *Confession of Faith*.

### **Claims of Men to be God’s Representative on Earth**

#### **The Pope is Declared to be Here (on Earth) in Place of Christ**

- “*The Pope is of so great dignity, and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God.*” (Ferraris Ecclesiastical (Church) dictionary)
- “*All names which in the Scriptures are applied to Christ, by virtue of which it is established that He is over the church, all the same names are applied to the Pope*” (On the Authority of the Councils, book 2, chapter 17).
- “*The Pope and God are the same, so he has all power in Heaven and earth*” (Pope Pius V, quoted in Barclay, Chapter XXVII, p. 218, “*Cities Petrus Bertanous*”).
- “*...the Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief of kings, having plenitude of power.*” (Lucius Ferraris, in “*Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica, Juridica, Moralis, Theologica, Ascetica, Polemica, Rubristica, Historica*”, Volume V, article on “*Papa, Article II*”, titled “*Concerning the extent of Papal dignity, authority, or dominion and infallibility*”, #1, 5, 13-15, 18, published in Petit-Montrouge (Paris) by J. P. Migne, 1858 edition).
- “*The Pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth...by divine right the Pope has supreme and full power in faith, in morals over each and every pastor and his flock. He is the true vicar, the head of the entire church, the father and teacher of all Christians. He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils; the universal ruler of truth, the arbiter of the world, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one, God himself on earth*” (Quoted in the New York Catechism).
- Writers on the Canon [or Catholic church] Law say, “*The Pope and God are the same, so he has all power in heaven and earth*” (Barclay Cap. XXVII, p. 218. *Cities Petrus Bertrandus, Pius V.* - Cardinal Cusa supports his statement).

- Pope Nicholas I declared: *“the appellation of God had been confirmed by Constantine on the Pope, who, being God, cannot be judged by man”* (Labbe IX Dist.: 96 Can. 7, Satis evidentur, Decret Gratian Primer Para).
- *“The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man .... he is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief of kings, having plenitude of power”* (Lucius Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca, 1763, Volume VI, ‘Papa II’, pp.25-29).
- *“The supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires... complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself”* (Leo VIII, On the Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens, Encyclical letter, 1890).
- *“God separates those whom the Roman Pontiff, who exercises the functions, not of mere man, but of the true God...dissolves, not by human but rather by divine authority”* (Decretals of Gregory IX, Book 1, Chapter 7.3).
- *“Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions (inferorum)”* (Lucius Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca, 1763, Volume VI, ‘Papa II’, p.26)
- *“Innocent III has written: “Indeed, it is not top much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices the priests are so many gods”* (The dignity of the priesthood by Liguori p, 36).
- *“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, he is Jesus Christ himself, hidden under the veil of flesh”* (Catholic National July 1895).
- *“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty”* (Pope Leo XIII Encyclical Letter of June 20, 1894).
- *“For thou art the shepherd, thou art the physician, thou art the director, thou art the husbandman, finally thou art another God on earth”* (Labbe and Cossart’s “History of the Councils.” Vol. XIV, col. 109).
- Roman Catholic Canon Law stipulates through Pope Innocent III that the Roman pontiff is *“the vicegerent upon earth, not a mere man, but of a very God;” and in a gloss on the passage it is explained that this is because he is the vicegerent of Christ, who is “very God and very man”* (Decretales Domini Gregorii translatione Episcoporum, (on the transference of Bishops), title 7, chapter 3; Corpus Juris Canonice (2nd Leipzig ed., 1881), col. 99; (Paris, 1612), tom. 2, Devretales, col. 205).
- *“The pope is the supreme judge of the law of the land... He is the vicegerent (replacement) of Christ, who is not only a Priest forever, but also King of kings and Lord of lords.”* (La Civilia Cattolica, March 18, 1871, quoted in Leonard Woosely Bacaon, An inside view of the Vatican Council; American Tract Society ed., p.229).

- “*Christ entrusted His office to the chief pontiff;... but all power in heaven and in earth has been given to Christ;... therefore the chief pontiff, who is His vicar, will have this power*” (Corpus Juris chap. 1 column 29, translated from a gloss on the words Porro Subesse Romano Pontiff ).
- “*The pope is the supreme judge of the law of the land . . . He is the vicegerent of Christ, and is not only a priest forever, but also King of kings and Lord of lords*” (La Civiltà Cattolica, March 18, 1871).
- “*All the faithful must believe that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff [the Pope] possesses the primacy over the whole world, and the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and is true vicar of Christ, and head of the whole church, and father and teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given to him in blessed Peter to rule, feed, and govern the universal Church by Jesus Christ our Lord*” (First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, “Eternal Pastor,” published in the fourth session of the Vatican Council, 1870, chap. 3, in Philip Schaff, Creeds of Christendom. vol. 2, p. 262).