

## Doctrine of Anti-Christ

1. The term "*anti-Christ*" refers to any false prophet and evil being who sets himself up against Christ and the people of God or who places himself up in the place of Christ.
2. The term "*anti-Christ*" is used exclusively by John in his writings in the *New Testament*. It refers to one who stands in opposition to all that Jesus Christ is, and represents.
  - *1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*
  - *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 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 anti-christ.*
3. John wrote that several antichrists existed already in his day in the form of false teachers. These individuals were against Christ because they denied the deity and the incarnation of Christ.
4. While many Christians today look outward to a political leader to be the anti-Christ, more care should be taken to look within the professing Church for teachers who deny Christ, or set themselves up in His place.
  - *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [of the Second Coming of Christ] 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. The Antichrist's primary work is deception, which also characterizes Satan in his attempts to undermine the work of God in the world.
6. Satan's deception began in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) and will continue until the end of time. Therefore, there will be many anti-Christ's until the end of time.

7. Those who worshipped the antichrist of the *Revelation* were to experience certain doom through the wrath of God.
- *Revelation 14:9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*
8. The anti-Christ of the *Revelation* made persistent war against Christ and His army, but he was to be captured and is "*cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone*".
- *Revelation 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*
9. Although the apostle Paul does not use the term anti-Christ, he surely had an Antichrist in mind when he wrote of the great apostasy, or falling away, that would occur before the return of Christ:
- *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [of the Second Coming of Christ] 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?*

The appearance of the Man of Sin could not take place apart from God's permission. So far the timing had not been right for the ultimate anti-Christ when Paul wrote his epistle and thus the Holy Spirit was restraining his appearance. Once restraints are removed from any life Satan will come to energize the heart, any heart.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:6 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 [one] 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, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

*11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:  
12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

10. The anti-Christ is also called the Lawless One who, empowered and inspired by Satan, will lead a rebellion against God, but will be destroyed at the coming of the Lord. If this coming of the Lord refers to the judgment upon Jerusalem in AD 70 then the church can look to a historical fulfillment of the Anti-Christ as the Man of Sin.

11. As Paul urged the Church to stand firm in the faith and not be deceived by the anti-Christ who will display "*all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders*" (2 Thes. 2:9) so every believer is warned not to be misled by the deceit of any anti-Christ at any time in history.

- *Matthew 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*
- *Matthew 24:23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*
- *Matthew 24:26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*
- *Mark 13:6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*
- *Mark 13:21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: 22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.*
- *Luke 21:8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.*
- *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; 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,*

*10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

### Anti-Christ in the Early Church

12. In the second century there was a work written known as the *Didache*. In the *Didache* there is a section entitled "*The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*" which is often quoted to support the idea that the early church believed in an imminent return of Christ. The *Didache* (II, 16) reads: *Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your lions unloosed; but be ye ready, for ye know not the hour in which our Lord cometh.*"
13. What is not quoted from the *Didache* is the rest of chapter 16 which teaches a post tribulation view and not imminence: *"...for the whole of your faith will not profit you, if ye be not made perfect in the last time.... Then shall appear the world-deceiver as the Son of God, and shall do signs and wonders. ...Then shall the creation of men come into the fire of trial, and many shall be made to stumble and perish; but they that endure in their faith shall be saved from under the curse itself."*
14. There is not one person that can be cited between the first century and 1830 who ever held to a pre-tribulational rapture view. Those who did hold to an imminent return of Christ always embraced a post-tribulational coming. They were convinced during periods of pressure that they were probably in the tribulation and that Christ must return soon.