



Contact Us:

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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study9:45 AM
Worship10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service 2:30 PM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

John Barnum

Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children
Gospel Broadcast Network
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

Who Is the Antichrist?

Who is the Antichrist? Our recent political discourse has proposed several solutions to this question including whether Obama or Trump is the Antichrist. The modern perception of the Antichrist holds him to be a singular, all-powerful, political ruler who opposes Christianity especially American Christian culture. Such views generally tie him to apocalyptic prophecy or end-times events such as the supposed millennial kingdom. Perhaps we should not be asking who in today's world (or recent history) is the antichrist. Instead let us ask this: What does the Bible say about the Antichrist? How many are there? Can we identify someone with the Antichrist?

How Many Antichrists Are There?

John the Apostle, in his first two epistles, is the only writer to explicitly address the figure of the antichrist. There are possible allusions to him elsewhere, but John remains our primary source. He writes thus,

*Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that **antichrist** is coming, so now many **antichrists** have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour (1 John 2:18).*

As the writer, John makes it clear even in his first reference to the entity (1 John 2:18), antichrists are a plurality. John explains to his readers that "now many antichrists have come." It is immediately fair, then, to dismiss the idea of a singular antichrist figure who is to dominate Christianity and bring about the end of time. Even in the day of John's readers, there were already those who were regarded as antichrists. So it is inappropriate to speak of a singular, capitalized "Antichrist" but instead as multiple, lower-case, antichrists who will threaten and challenge the church. This seems to be the view of the second-century church writer Polycarp which effectively echoes John's own words in the epistles (Polycarp, *To the Philippians* 7:1).

Who Are the Antichrists?

If we cannot identify a singular antichrist, then who then are these antichrists?

First, an antichrist **denies that Jesus is the Christ** (1 John 2:22). Indeed, they do not even confess Him (1 John 4:3). They are literally the fulfillment of the word's meaning, "against Christ." Perhaps such ones can see Jesus as some sort of benevolent and good teacher, but not as the Messiah of God.

Second, the antichrists are **deceivers and liars**. They are liars because they deny Jesus is the Christ (2:22) and they do not have the Father despite what they might have convinced themselves.

(Continued on page 2)



Then they also will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?" Then He will answer them, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me."
Matthew 25:44-45

(Continued from page 1)

Third, they **deny that Jesus came in the flesh** (2 John 7). In the early church some taught Jesus came but not in the flesh. He only *appeared* to be flesh and only *appeared* to die and so on. Even though they can affirm the Christ (to some extent) they deny His humanity and are no different than those who oppose Christ.

John’s three characteristics of the antichrist effectively have but one common denominator: the antichrist is anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ (in the flesh). This is a broader category than many of the recent political identifications would allow. Yet the proper interpretation of these passages has not prevented endless speculations around the “Antichrist” especially when considering other New Testament passages that *may* allude to Him. These include the “*deceivers*” and “*false christs*” (Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22), the “*man of lawlessness*” (2 Thess. 2:3), and the beasts in John’s vision (Rev. 13 & 16).

The man of lawlessness is described as a figure who “*opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God*” (2 Thess. 2:4). Yet Paul speaks of him as one whom the Thessalonians are aware of since they “*know what is restraining him now.*” This figure was “*already at work*” and will continue to do so until the Day of the Lord comes. This suggests ongoing work by this Satan-empowered effort (Doug Bursleson, “Who is the Man of Lawlessness?” in *The Patience of Hope: First and Last Things in Thessalonians*).

The beasts of Revelation, especially that of the second beast who is a “*deceiver,*” are also candidates for the antichrist (Charles E. Hill, “Antichrist,” *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*). However, given that John wrote both Revelation and the epistles, the beasts are never called “antichrists.” This view seems to have originated in the second century, particularly with Irenaeus, who links the antichrist to Daniel 7 and the man of lawlessness (*Against the Heresies* 5.15). While these figures do certainly have characteristics of the antichrists as

described in John, the passages under consideration do not explicitly support the modern conception of the singular, monolithic “Antichrist.”

Are Antichrists Political Figures?

Based on the biblical identification of the antichrist as a person who is *against* Christ, we should now realize that this is a question of theology rather than politics. It is entirely possible that a political denier of Christ will arise and stand against Christians. Many of the have already come and *will continue to come*. First-century Christians endured the persecutions by Christ-deniers such as the Jerusalem Jewish leadership, local synagogue leaders, Roman officials, and others. They attempted to suppress the preaching and teaching of the gospel, which the apostles so boldly resisted (Acts 4:18).

Missionaries today face oppressive government regimes. Working Christians grapple with superiors who disdain the faith and disrespect times of worship. These are antichrists present in our own lives and actively working in the world. But antichrists can be found in unexpected places too. Maybe even your church.

Antichrists Could Be Sitting In Your Pew

External threats are easy targets for criticism since they are “over there.” But often the greatest threats come from within. John discusses how some had “*gone out from us, but they were not of us*” (1 John 2:19). Who are these people? John calls them antichrists. These are not foreign rulers or oppressive political leaders. They sit in our pews and fellowship with us.

Jesus warned of such persons who come in sheep’s clothing (Matt. 7:15) and others mention those who infiltrate the people of God to deceive them (2 Cor. 11:13–15; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 1:4). We have to be on our guard so that we are not caught in their mechanizations because within our churches *there are antichrists among us*. They threaten the unity of the body, oppose Christ, and deny the Father.

(Continued on page 3)

Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00am on KTAB

In Search of the Lord’s Way (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:00am on KTAB

Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org
Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

God’s Plan for Redeeming Man

Hear Learn the saving message of Christ’s sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).

Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)

Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)

Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)

Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

Live faithfully (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

Bible Reading Schedule

video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/

Aug. 11 Nehemiah 11—13

Aug. 12 Esther 1—4

Aug. 13 Esther 5—7

Aug. 14 Esther 8—10

Aug. 15 Job 1—4 (video)

Aug. 16 Job 5—8 (video)

Aug. 17 Job 9—11

Aug. 18 Job 12—15

“*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”

(2 Timothy 2:15)



Visitation Meeting

- ◆ Each Sunday night immediately before the evening worship. Last week **47 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ **Thank You** to everyone who helped make the Summer Youth Series Tuesday night a great success. We had approximately 120-125 in attendance. Great lesson. Great singing. Great fellowship.
- ◆ Next Sunday **Dr. Charles Hall** will be with us to present all three lessons, while Johnny and Cindy attend Polishing the Pulpit.
- ◆ We have a **topic for our upcoming Fall Gospel Meeting, “Evangelism in Word and Deed,”** a study of Colossians 3:17 in light of the study of the early church in Acts and other principles and examples in the New Testament. Should be uplifting and challenging!
- ◆ **Birthday Celebration—Don Smith** is turning 80! All are invited to celebrate with him Saturday afternoon, 1:00-4:00pm, at the Beatie Community Center. See Don or Darlene for directions.
- ◆ **Church Directory**—If you have not received the latest directory updates, need a new picture, or have not returned the paper you were given, please see Cindy McCaghren.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ Oct. 19—Ladies Day w/ Denise Surles
- ◆ Oct. 27-30—Fall Gospel Meeting w/ Bryan Braswell. “Evangelism in Word and Deed”

Other Upcoming Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ August 16-22—Polishing the Pulpit (Sevierville, TN)
- ◆ Sept. 22-25—Gospel Meeting at 9th & Main (San Angelo) w/ Brent Stubblefield
- ◆ Sept. 29—Oct. 2—Bangs Gospel Meeting w/ B. J. Clarke
- ◆ Oct. 3-5—Texas Ladies in Christ Retreat @ Brady
- ◆ Oct. 12-30—Lectureship @ Hico. “My Favorite Sermon”
- ◆ Oct. 19-20—Back to the Bible Lectures @ Hamilton. “Doctrines/Attitudes Troubling the Church”

(Continued from page 2)

Conclusion

Antichrists have come. Antichrists will come. Antichrists are here now. They deny our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They may sit in seats of power or they may sit in our pews. They may persecute us or offer a veil of peace. We may work with them or under them. Wherever they may be found, such persons “are not of us.” Lord willing, as in the case of John, they will go out from us.

Spencer Clark (plainsimplefaith.com)

Celebrate

“Rejoice with those who rejoice...” (Romans 12:15)

August Birthdays: Joe Dennis (9), **Rafe Smith (11), Jessica Dennis (13), Don Smith (14), Royce Ford (16)**, Ryan Rudloff (20), Roy Dodson (29), Coyce Reed (30).

August Anniversaries: **Matthew and Kaci Churchwell (15)**, Don and Darlene Smith (29).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	July 28, 2019	Aug. 4, 2019
Bible Class	48	53
AM Worship	58	54
PM Worship	46	38
Wednesday PM	39	33
Contribution	\$2,089	\$1,761

	This Week: 8/11/19	Next Week: 8/18/19		
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Ken Maninger	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	<p>August 2019 Make Announcements: Don Smith Prepare Communion: Mike & Patti Bannister Clean Building: Mike & Patti Bannister</p> <p>September 2019 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: John Barnum Family Clean Building: John Barnum Family</p>	
Greeters	Maninger Family	James & Cindy Fuller		
Opening Prayer	Don Smith	Allen Griffith		
Communion	Allen Griffith*, Vernon Zier Chase Churchwell, Randy Huckaby	Ryan Rudloff*, Coyce Reed James Fuller, Ken Maninger		
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	Randy Huckaby		
Attendance Cards	Aaron Smith	Ian Barnum		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: James Fuller	Song Leader: Joe Dennis		
Opening Prayer	Ryan Rudloff	Tom Wilcox		
Scripture Reading	Rafe Smith	John Barnum		
Communion	Allen Griffith	Ryan Rudloff		
Closing Prayer	Mike Bannister	Gene Bannister		
Wednesday Devotionals:	August 14 Joe Dennis	August 21 Rafe Smith	August 28 Don Smith	September 4 Prayer Night

Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Studies for the week of August 11, 2019

Sunday Class 1 Corinthians 6:9
 Wed. Class Servant Training: Prayer

How Not to Treat Our Fellow Man	Final Remarks (Col. 4:2-18)
<p>When we stand before the Lord on that great and final day, we will be judged predominately (though not exclusively) on how we have or have not treated our fellow man (Mt. 25:31-46). Since that is the case, let us notice four points from the Book of Proverbs on "How We Should Not Treat Our Fellow Man".</p> <p>I. We Should Not Envy Our Fellow Man.</p> <p>A. When you talk about envy, you are talking about something serious.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus stood before Pilate "because of envy" (Mk. 15:10). 2. Its meaning is deeper than "jealousy," dealing with anger and bitterness. <p>B. "Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, but who is able to stand before jealousy?" (27:4);</p> <p>II. We Should Not Strive with Others.</p> <p>A. "Strive not with a man without cause, if he has done you no harm" (3:30).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We need to make sure we have all the facts (25:8; 18:17). 2. Jesus gave a similar admonition to the people of His day (Jn. 7:24). <p>B. "The beginning of strife is like releasing water; therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts" (17:14).</p> <p>C. "Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood is to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body" (26:20-22).</p> <p>III. We Should Not Protect the Guilty and Abandon the Innocent.</p> <p>A. If a person is guilty, he deserves his reward: "A man burdened with bloodshed will flee into a pit; let no one help him" (28:17).</p> <p>B. On the other hand, we also have a responsibility to the innocent (24:11-12).</p> <p>IV. We Are Not to Show Partiality.</p> <p>A. "In truth I perceive that God shows not partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:34-35).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "These things also belong to the wise: it is not good to show partiality in judgment" (24:23). 2. "To show partiality is not good, because for a piece of bread a man will transgress" (28:21). <p>B. "It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, or to overthrow the righteous in judgment" (18:5).</p>	<p>Admonition to Pray, Especially for Paul (4:2-4)</p> <p>Two lessons can be drawn from Paul's concluding remarks to the Colossians: First, Christians are to practice positive activities such as praying (4:2-4).</p> <p>I. "Continue earnestly in [devote yourselves to] prayer" (2a).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Paul often encouraged his readers to spend time in prayer¹ and often asked them to pray for him.² B. "Continue earnestly" is associated with consistency (Mk. 9:3; Acts 2:46; 8:13; 10:7; Rom. 12:8). C. The word translated "prayer" is more often used of supplication than thanksgiving (Mk. 9:29; 12:5; Rom. 1:10; 15:30; Jas. 5:17). <p>II. "Being vigilant [keeping alert] in it with [an attitude of] thanksgiving" (2b).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Colossians were to remain awake and watchful, being vigilant. B. The injunction to remain vigilant [alert] implies constant danger. C. When Paul said to keep alert in it, he was referring to prayer; in contrast to being like the world, which is lulled to sleep and overcome by the devil. <p>III. "Meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word" (3a).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Praying is in the present tense, indicating that Paul wanted continual prayers to be offered for him and his companions. B. Not only did Paul urge the Colossians to pray in general, but he also named specifically things for which to pray. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That God ... open up ... a door for the preaching of the gospel. 2. For the word (λόγος). <p>IV. "To speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains" (3b).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Because of his preaching about the mystery of Christ, Paul was in chains. B. Paul switched from using "us" to "I"; from what was common to himself and others to what was peculiar to himself. <p>V. "That I may make it manifest [clear], as I ought to speak" (4).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Paul wanted his speech to be well-spoken and easily grasped. B. As I ought to speak includes the idea of necessity, duty, obligation, and unalterable requirement. C. The power to save is in the message (Rom. 1:16), not the messenger.
	<p>¹ Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:12; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17. ² Rom. 15:30-32; 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1-2; Phil. 22.</p>