

## 1<sup>st</sup> John Lesson 5 - The Antichrist Spirit

**1Jn 2:18-19** 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. (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.

### **Interesting Fact:**

Most people are surprised to learn that the word "antichrist" occurs only in the epistles of John. It is not the only place the antichrist is spoken of in the Bible, but only John uses that specific word and he only uses it in his epistles, not the gospel of John nor the book of Revelation.

The apostle Paul did not use the word "antichrist." He referred to the antichrist as a specific person at the end of the age. Paul refers to him as the "man of sin." The individual known as THE antichrist is not the subject of our teaching today, but Paul gives us some good insight into the nature of the "antichrist spirit" when he wrote,

**2Th 2:3-4** 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.

1. Opposeth – G480 antikeimai - to lie opposite, that is, be adverse: adversary, be contrary, oppose.
  - a. He is opposite and contrary to all that is called God, or that is worshipped.
2. Exalteth Himself – a compound Greek word – G5229 huperairomai *hoop-er-ah'ee-rom-ah-ee* – to raise oneself over; to exalt self, to be exalted above measure.
  - a. I am above all that is called God, and that includes Christ.
  - b. Implication: I do not need to listen to God because ... I am God.
  - c. This is the spirit of the devil himself. The first war in heaven was when he tried to exalt himself above God.

**Isa 14:12-15** How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! (13) For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most

**High. (15) Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.**

This same spirit that is against God, and sees itself as being above God, will culminate in a single man that Paul writes about who will come at the last of the last days. Paul refers to that man as the "man of sin" and the "son of perdition."

John is not writing about "the individual" known as the "man of sin" that Paul teaches about. John is referring to the many people who have the "spirit of antichrist" already working their deceitfulness **in the church**. It was already happening in John's day, and it is still happening today. Notice how this starts off by saying, "Little children, it is the last time." John, as the faithful witness to Jesus over fifty years later, is teaching what he heard Jesus teach,

**Mat 24:3-5** And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? (4) And Jesus answered and said unto them, **Take heed that no man deceive you. (5) For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.**

**Mat 24:24** **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.**

When asked what the sign of the end is, Jesus first response was, "**Take heed that no man deceive you.**" **DECEPTION** is the number one tool of the devil. Jesus taught he is the very father of lies. Many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall **DECEIVE** many. Many would claim to be the Messiah ... the Christ. Understand what that statement means. They are saying, "*Jesus was not the true Messiah. I am the true Messiah. You don't need to listen to what Jesus taught. You need to listen to what I teach.*"

#### **A brief history lesson [Albert Barnes]:**

[The Messiah was expected at that time. Many would lay claims to being the Messiah, and, as He was universally expected, multitudes would easily be led to believe in them. There is abundant evidence that this was fully accomplished. Josephus informs us that there were many who pretended to divine inspiration; who deceived the people, leading out numbers of them into the desert. "The land," says He "was overrun with magicians, seducers, and impostors, who drew the people after them in multitudes into solitudes and deserts, to see I the signs and miracles which they promised to show by the power of God." Among these are mentioned particularly Dositheus, the Samaritan, who affirmed

that He was Christ; Simon Magus, who said He appeared among the Jews as the Son of God; and Theudas, who persuaded many to go with him to the river Jordan, to see the waters divided. Other historians give the names of 24 false Messiahs who are recorded as having appeared between the time of the Emperor Hadrian and the year 1682.]

John is saying what Jesus said, and even in the first century many "false christs" ... or as John uses the word "antichrists" have gone out into the world. John is not saying Jesus is coming back right away, but he is saying that Jesus taught we will know we are in the "last time" ... the last dispensation.

**1Jn 2:18-19 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.**

John continues,

**1Jn 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.**

**They went out from us** ... from being in fellowship with John and his disciples. These people had at one time been associated with John and his disciples, but notice very carefully what John writes about them ... **they were not of us** ... meaning, they did not really belong to us, they were not true Christians. The Greek words John chose to use mean that these persons, no matter that they said they were Christians, in truth they never were! They went out from us, but they were not of us. John chose to use the Greek word for "not" in that verse which means, "absolutely completely NOT to the point of it being an impossibility." John could use no stronger term than to say ... they were NOT of us!

**For if they had been of us, they would ~~no doubt~~ have continued with us:** If they had been "of" us ... true Christians yielded to the lordship of Christ ... they would have continued with us. They would not have left our fellowship. They would not have turned against the teachings of Christ. They would not become an "antichrist."

**But *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.** Something caused them to finally have to separate themselves from the fellowship of the apostle John and the other disciples. They could stay no longer. When they left ... THEN ... it became apparent to everybody they were no longer a part of John's fellowship. Remember earlier one of the reasons John wrote this epistle? He was declaring faithfully what he had "heard and seen" of Jesus. For what purpose?

**1Jn 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.**

[Gary: Something kept gnawing at me way down deep regarding this passage. I knew there was something more than what I had always heard about it. I would read and pray, read and pray ... until finally ... the Holy Spirit our Teacher came to my rescue with one word ... "CONTEXT."]

These men could not agree with what John had "seen and heard" from Jesus. They wanted to be able to say they were Christians, but they could not abide the teachings that John had seen and heard from Jesus Christ Himself. Why does John mention the antichrist spirit at this point in his letter? Because, in context, he has already described many of the doctrines of Christ that these men were "anti" to. They did not agree with the doctrines of Christ. They declared they could be right with God without obeying the doctrine of Christ. Here is a brief review of just some of what John has declared that he had "seen and heard" from Jesus so far in this epistle. This is the "context" so far;

1. God is light and so are you.
2. There is no darkness in Him and there is none in you.
3. You don't have to sin anymore.
4. If you commit a sin you have an advocate with the Father.
5. Don't think you can live in habitual sin and have fellowship with God. You can't.
6. If you do not keep His commandments, you do not know Him.
7. If you do not keep His commandments, you do not love Him.
8. If you love Him, you cannot love the world, nor the things that are in the world.

That was the last straw. Those men believed, like most Christians today believe, that you can have God and the world at the same time. NO! That is not what Jesus taught. YOU CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON! YOU ARE NOT OF THE WORLD. THE WORLD HATES YOU. You love God, or you love the world ... but you cannot love both. You serve God, or you serve mammon. You cannot serve both. And that's where these men said, *"John and all who believe like you ... we don't agree with you ... we don't believe that ... we don't believe you ... we believe you can have God and the world at the same time."* We believe we can be right with God and not have to obey the teachings of Jesus Christ.

THE RADICAL GRACE TEACHERS TODAY USE ALMOST EXACTLY THOSE SAME WORDS. THEY SAY THE WORDS OF JESUS BEFORE THE

RESURRECTION DO NOT APPLY TO THE CHRISTIAN. HERE ARE DIRECT QUOTES [COPIED AND PASTED] FROM TWO OF THE MOST PROMINENT RADICAL GRACE PREACHERS TODAY. ONE OF THEM IS ON TELEVISION MANY TIMES A DAY, EVEN HERE IN TULSA. BOTH OF THESE MEN PASTOR CHURCHES WITH OVER FORTY THOUSAND MEMBERS.

### **Hyper Grace teacher #1**

"Whether interpreting the Old Testament, or the words which Jesus spoke in the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), let Jesus and His finished work at the cross be the key to unlocking all the precious gems hidden in God's Word. This means that we have to read everything in the context of what He came to do and what He accomplished at the cross for us. For example, some things that Jesus said in the four gospels were spoken before the cross—before He had died for our sins—and some were said after the cross—when He had already won our complete forgiveness and rightfully given us His righteousness. **It is the latter that applies to us (believers under the new covenant) today.**"

### **Hyper Grace teacher #2**

"Matthew 5:1–7:29 is the 'Sermon on the Mount'. Is this sermon intended for the church? Absolutely not! It's intended for the self-righteous. It's a pre-salvation preach that exposes self-righteous pride and performance and reveals the need for God's righteousness as a gift through faith in order to see the Kingdom and become children of God. Unless you really understand grace, don't go near the Beatitudes. They will mess you up! Teaching the Beatitudes to Christians produces legalism and religious pride or condemnation in them. We must rightly divide the Word of God to see what Jesus was saying and trying to achieve here. He wasn't preaching to a church. He wasn't preaching to born again believers. He was preaching to Jews where the climate of the day was a striving for righteousness through works. **The church doesn't need the Sermon on the Mount. If you were to ask Jesus if he intended that sermon to be a standard that the church measures itself against, he would either start rolling around on the floor screaming with laughter, or bow his head and weep.**"

The apostle John does not agree with these men at all. John is doing exactly what Jesus told him to do over fifty years ago,

**Mat 28:19-20 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.**

John is faithfully teaching what He had "seen and heard" Jesus teach, **before and after the resurrection.**

It is important that I tell you that none of the Radical Grace preachers I have heard openly advocate committing sin. But what they do is to remove all penalty if you do sin. They each phrase it a little differently, but the consensus is, *"All of your sins, past, present, and future have been forgiven"* and with that statement they are removing all penalty if you continue to live in habitual sin. **THAT IS NOT WHAT JESUS TAUGHT! THAT IS NOT WHAT JOHN IS TEACHING!**

**Mat 7:21-23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

**1Jn 2:3-4 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. (4) He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**

I give you a fresh warning from the lips of Jesus and the writings of the apostle John. Anybody who is teaching you that you do not have to listen to the teachings of Jesus have the antichrist spirit within them. They are exalting themselves above the Messiah Himself. They are anti, in opposition to, the teachings of Jesus the Christ. It does not matter that they claim to be Christian and it does not matter that they may have signs and wonders in their services. The antichrist spirit says, *"You do not have to obey the teachings of Christ!"* The Hyper Grace Teachers say exactly that. Not just these two say it. All of them say it. Not all of the Hyper Grace teachers are so blatant as these two, but if you look carefully, you will find the same false doctrine at the heart of their teachings. Why? Because they cannot teach what they teach without denying the plain teachings of Jesus Christ. They have to remove the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ from your thinking in order for you to believe the false doctrine they are teaching.

John is recording that even in the first century, the radical grace doctrine had already started. It is opposite to the doctrine of Christ. It is "anti ... Christ." They want to be included as Christians, but they are not willing to yield to the doctrines of Christ that John is being a faithful witness to. They are saying NO to the doctrines of Christ. They are DENYING His teachings. It finally got to the point they had to separate themselves from the fellowship of John and the true disciples of Christ. The antichrist spirit runs

rampant in the church today, not just in the radical grace camp.

**Modern day examples:**

*I am a good Christian, but I have been living with my girlfriend for five years.*

*I am a good Christian, but my whole life is about building my business and having nicer things than my neighbors.*

*I know I should give a portion to God for the work of the gospel, but most important right now is that I build my business even bigger than before, so I can bring in more money than ever. [Did you ever hear of always building bigger barns?]*

*I am a good Christian, but I get high on alcohol and drugs every week. It's just to relieve the pressure.*

*I am a good Christian, but I will never forgive those who hurt me.*

*I am a good Christian, but I will never love my enemies, or pray for them.*

*I am a good Christian, but I never give to the poor, or help widows or orphans.*

*Since all my sins are forgiven, past, present, and future ... then it really doesn't matter how I live. He will receive me into heaven whether I depart from iniquity or not.*

But there are even more subtle deceptions than these.

**Preview of chapter four:**

**1Jn 4:2-3 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: (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.**

Most people would never believe they are speaking from an "antichrist" point of view when they say things like, "*Jesus did not really come in the flesh as a human being. Jesus could keep from sinning because He was God. I'm just me. I can't stop sinning. I know Jesus said His followers would not walk in darkness, but I'm just too weak to stop sinning. Oh, and by the way, only Jesus can do the works of the Father. I could never do the same works Jesus did.*"