

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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IDENTIFYING THE ANTICHRIST

In spite of all the clear scriptural teachings found in the Bible concerning "antichrist", men have found ways to create their own illusions. These men, mostly premillennialists, have invented fanciful theories about the end of time and their idea of "The Antichrist" plays a major role. Let us examine some of the more popular ideas about "antichrist" today.

The premillennialist believes that the end of time begins with the Rapture (this idea first came along in the 1830s!). In the Rapture, all the faithful saints are "caught up" in the air to meet the Lord (supposedly based on 1 Thes. 4:17). Then the Great Tribulation begins, a seven-year period of great suffering for those

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left on earth. (This part of the theory comes from a gross misinterpretation of Dan. 9:27.)

The premillennialist says that the Antichrist will emerge during the Tribulation. At first, everybody loves him (they say the Antichrist is definitely a male). He's a charming, powerful political ruler, a man of peace. He leads a 10-nation confederacy, which is why many people distrust the United Nations and the European Community. He arranges a peace treaty or "covenant" for Israel, and for 3-1/2 years all is well.

Then the Antichrist breaks the treaty and takes control. He becomes a dictator, causing bloodshed and enslavement. He becomes an arrogant blasphemer, speaking out against the God Almighty. His true character shows that he is a deceiver, a beast, and one of Satan's.

At the end of the Tribulation period, our premillennialist friends say, Christ is to return to earth. At that time He defeats the Antichrist in the Battle of Armageddon, sets up His earthly Kingdom, and enjoys 1000 years of peace on earth with the "Raptured" Christians.

Speculation about the identification of the Antichrist has been a popular game for many centuries. Nominees have included Napoleon, the Salem witches, Martin Luther, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, Gorbachev, Arafat, Jimmy Carter, Ayatollah Khomeini, Ronald Reagan, Saddam Hussein, liberal Bible scholars, Jews, Muslims and their prophet Muhammad, the Roman Catholic Church and numerous popes, including John Paul II.

Hal Lindsey, whose apocalyptic The Late Great Planet Earth was the top-seller of the 1970s, pegged the Antichrist as a European man who would one day head the Common Market. In

1980, evangelist Pat Robertson asserted "there's a man alive today, approximately 27 years old, who is now being groomed to be the satanic messiah." Today that "man" is about 42 years old. But who is he?

Regardless of what men say about "The Antichrist", those of us who really want to know the truth will find our answers in God's Word. We find that the word "antichrist" appears in only four verses in the Bible -- all writings of the Apostle John. Surprisingly enough, none of these verses come from the book of prophecy, Revelation. So now let us examine these four occurrences and see if we can clearly identify the "antichrist".

During the Christian era (also called the "last days") John wrote in 1 Jn. 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."* In this particular passage, the term "antichrist" is used twice: first in the singular tense and second in the plural tense. Therefore we can immediately determine that the "antichrist" is NOT just one person; it can refer to a group of people!

But notice also in 1 Jn. 2:18 that the antichrist was already in existence at the time of John's writings! He specifically wrote, *"even NOW are there many antichrists"*. This one phrase certainly does significant damage to the modern-day theories of premillennialists and their twisted ideas of the Antichrist.

John continues writing about the "antichrist" a few verses later: *"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son?"* (1 Jn. 2:22) Now we should have a clear understanding of what the "antichrist" really

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is. Antichrist is not a specific person as many want to claim, but it is anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ and the Messiah! Anyone who opposes Jesus Christ is an "anti-christ" in the purest definition of the term.

The apostle clears the air furthermore in 1 Jn. 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"* This is the ultimate test given to all teachers who boast of having God's Spirit, to see if they are actually anti-Christ. John said to *"try the spirits"* whether they make the confession that Paul stated in 1 Cor. 12:3, *"That no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:"* Few people today will deny that a man named Jesus lived on this earth at one time but most will deny that this same Man was the Messiah and the divine Son of God. Such people have the spirit of *"antichrist"*.

The fourth verse repeats exactly what the *"antichrist"* is: a deceiver with the spirit of denial. *"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:"* (2 John 7)

In our brief study we have noted that men have identified the Antichrist as a dominant man who will appear in the end of time. In the scriptures God says "antichrist" is anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Now, whose word will you believe?

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. What country was Nebuchadnezzar king of?
2. What did Jesus say the Pharisees shut in men's faces?
3. Paul's teaching caused a great uproar in Ephesus over what goddess?
4. Which animal is not mentioned in the Bible: ape, fox, hare, tiger, or whale?
5. When Isaac realized he had blessed Jacob instead of Esau, what was his physical reaction?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Who were the couple who helped Apollos understand that Jesus was Christ? **AQUILA AND PRISCILLA (Acts 18:24-26)**
2. In pursuing the Amalekites, David was aided by one of their servants. What was the servant's nationality? **EGYPTIAN (1 Sam. 30:13)**
3. How many brothers did the rich man have in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus? **FIVE (Luke 16:28)**
4. What never satisfies us, if we love silver? **SILVER (Eccl. 5:10)**

5. What besides the firstborn children of the land of Egypt were killed by the last plague God sent? THE FIRSTBORN OF THE BEASTS (Exo. 11:5)

WHICH WILL YOU IMITATE? SARAH or JEZEBEL?

Dear Sisters, you do not have to be a "lewd woman" to displease God, for in I Thes. 5:22 we are there told to *"Abstain from all appearance of evil"*. Therefore, we had better be careful. Again, I refer to II Peter 1:10, *"Give diligence to make your calling and election sure"*. With this in mind, let us study seriously.

In II Kings 9:30, we find Jezebel who *"painted her face"*. In Ezek. 23:40-44, the purpose of women painting their face and eyes is given. Some will say, "I am not that woman." I am sure they are not, yet they give the appearance of being. Let me give an example: next Lord's Day you see me pass a "bar room", later you see me with a bottle of whiskey in my pocket. Even though I had drunk none, there would be the appearance of evil. Another thought: picture your husband or sweetheart walking down the street, holding a "lewd woman's" hand. Would you say there is no harm in that? Surely it would be the appearance of evil.

Also, let us watch our clothing. Turn with me to Deut. 22:5. *"The women shall not wear that which pertaineth to a man neither shall a man wear that which pertaineth to a woman, for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord"*. What about our costly clothing? God forbids such in I Tim. 2:9. *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the*

lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn. 2:15-16)

Should you cut your hair? If you do, it becomes your shame instead of your glory (Phil. 3:18-19). Notice in 1 Cor. 11:15, *"if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her (not to her husband or to anyone else): for her hair is given her for a covering."* Now, in the face of all that, could you cut your hair, smear paint on your face, wear bathing suits, men's clothes, costly garments and still be a disciple indeed?

Now Sister, will you consider a very noble woman: Sarah. Turn with me to 1 Peter 3:1-6. God wants holy women to adorn themselves, not like an harlot, but with the hidden man of the heart -- *"even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."* Look what this great woman did, who trusted in God, and how they adorned themselves. If such women as Sarah adorned themselves with the Spirit of God, they would teach the young women how to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste keepers at home. Remember the words of Christ in John 8:31-32. See also John 12:48 and Rev. 22:14.

Just a few more thoughts on what Christian women should do. In Acts 9:39 the women made garments and in 1 Tim. 5:10, we see there are several good works: bringing up children, lodging strangers, washing the saints feet, relieving the afflicted and following every good work.

Which one of these characters will you follow? Do you want to be a Disciple indeed? Remember in 1 Peter 4:18-19 we are warned, *"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where*

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Sept. 11 - 15	Lily Church near London, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
Sept. 18 - 22	Chestnut Grove Church Parksville, KY	W.W. Boland (Gadsden, AL)
Sept. 24 - 29	Bogue Chitto, MS	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
Oct. 6 - 8	Pleasant Ridge Church Woodbury, TN	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)

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(continued from page 7)

shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Which type of woman are you? Do you adorn yourself with your hair cut, your face painted, your slacks and bathing suits, sun suits, and fine clothing? Or, are you an humble, meek, quiet, God-fearing, home builder; unspotted from the world, steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord? Which --- Which are you???

This is written with a hope that it will help someone to better understand the words of Christ.

A brother in Christ,
MILES E. BUSBY (deceased)

LIFE WITH CHRIST
IS AN ENDLESS HOPE;
WITHOUT HIM A HOPELESS END.