

Women's Bible Study

March 23, 2022

1 John 2:18-19

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. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

Children

1 John 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

John is informing them to pay attention so that they would not be corrupted by the many individuals who were troubling his congregation by their false doctrine. John turns from encouragement and exhortation in the previous verses to warning. He warns against those who oppose Christ in their teachings.

John records in First and Second John, an antichrist denies:

The Father and the Son

1 John 2:22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.

Does not acknowledge Jesus

1 John 4:3 And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

Denies that Jesus came in the flesh

2 John 1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

There have been many “antichrists,” as 1 John 2:18 states. But there is also coming the Antichrist.

While the term's first occurrence refers to a particular person prophesied in Scripture, this one is plural and refers to many individuals. John uses the plural to identify and characterize the false teachers who were troubling John's congregations because their false doctrine distorted the truth and opposed Christ. *American Tract Society*

Dictionary

It is the last hour

Hebrews 1:1-2 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

It was foretold and predicted by our Lord that in the last days, sin and wickedness would increase and false Christs and false prophets would arise. This is the spirit of the antichrist which held doctrines that were in entire opposition to the Son of God.

Matthew 24:10-12 And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

Mark 13:22 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

2 Peter 3:3 Knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

Presently, is sin and wickedness abounding more and more?

And as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come

Anti-christ(s): Can either mean “against Christ” or “instead of Christ” or perhaps combining the two, one who assuming the guise of Christ opposes Christ and takes his place. *Vine's NT Commentary*

Matthew 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

One commentator states: “John says there were already many antichrists, many having the spirit of an antichrist: unbelievers, heretics, and persecutors. Many false teachings of Christianity were emerging at the time. The heresy of Gnosticism that taught Jesus only appeared to have a human body but was not actually a flesh-and-blood person, was prevalent.”

The spirit of antichrist has many forms, and is present in every age. Everything which robs Christ of his glory is antichristian. *Spurgeon Devotional Commentary*

Is the spirit of the antichrist active today?

1 John 4:3 And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

Matthew 24:5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.

2 Peter 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

False prophets have been around since Old Testament times. These false Christs and prophets fool many people into believing their lies, they manipulate the Word of God and draw people away from the Lord. John writes to expose those who provide lies.

Acts 20:28-30 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

1 John 2:22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-7 Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you.

How can we be aware of those who would come among us and attempt to fill us with satan's lies?

Don't ever think that there are many ways to the Divine. Jesus is the one qualified mediator, the only qualified sacrifice, and the only qualified savior. *Erwin W. Lutzer*

Every single word of God is the truth as He cannot lie. Whoever teaches something that goes against the truth revealed in the Bible is teaching through a spirit of error.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

2 Timothy 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

As believers in Christ who know the truth, we are to have no part with darkness, but rather, we are to expose it.

Ephesians 5:11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

2 Peter 3:17-18 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability (strength). But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

What is our responsibility?

Therefore we know that it is the last hour

John is calling the entire period between Jesus' ascension and His return the last hour. No one knows how long this period will last, but the phrase implies a sense of urgency, in that Jesus may come at any moment. Jesus warned us about false prophets that would come after Him, claiming to come from God, but who are deceivers. That is why it is important for every Christian to know how to discern them.

Luke 21:8 And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.

1 Peter 4:7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

Jude 1:18 They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions."

How do we prepare our hearts and minds for the difficulties to come?

In this world we will have trials and difficulties, this is a guarantee because we do not live in a perfect world. But there is hope! We can expect perfection in Christ and one day, in His heavenly kingdom!

God is walking with us during these difficult times. We are never alone! He will not leave us and we can find comfort by casting all our care on Him. We can find rest in Him as we trust Him to help us carry “the load” and to sustain us through the trials. Our Lord knows what the future brings to each one of us! Remember, when we call out to our Lord in prayer, we are coming before the Mighty One Who is all powerful and knowing and loves us deeply.

Isaiah 41:13 For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.”

John 16:33 “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Hebrews 13:5b For he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

In and through Christ’ Word we can overcome anything! I am reminded of the verse in *Matthew 10:29-31 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

I love the lyrics of the song *Sparrows* by Cory Asbury- The sparrow’s not worried ’bout tomorrow, or the troubles to come. The lily’s not thinking ’bout the seasons, the drought or the flood. A tree that’s planted by the water, isn’t fazed by the fire. So why should I be? ’Cause You take good care of me, You take good care of me, You know what I need before I even ask a thing, And You hold me in Your hands, with a kindness that never ends, I’m carried in Your love no matter what the future brings.

1 John 2:19

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

They went out from us, but they were not of us

1 Corinthians 11:19 For there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

These false teachers who were among John and other believers, heard God's truth and yet in their hearts they did not believe God's truth. They claimed to be believers but were never really converted to the Christian faith. They abandoned the faith giving proof they were not real believers.

Acts 15:24 Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions.

Acts 20:30 And from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

2 Peter 2:20-23 For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."

What were these false teachers doing?

Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!

2 Corinthians 11:4 For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us

These liars and deceivers no longer spoke the truth or believed they truth, they were hypocrites in religion and were not who they pretended to be.

If they were true believers, what would they have done?

The ultimate test of true Christianity is endurance.

Mark 13:13 And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Romans 2:7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

Hebrews 3:14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

Hebrews 10:35-36 Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

Hebrews 10:39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

What is the evidence of being a true believer of Christ?

Those genuinely born again endure in faith and fellowship and the truth. The righteous continue in their walk with the Lord.

Job 17:9 Yet the righteous holds to his way, and he who has clean hands grows stronger and stronger.

2 Timothy 2:12 If we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us.

How can we be sure to endure to the end?

For the believer who believes and trusts in the Lord and His Word there are wonderful promises given to every generation.

John 4:14 But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

John 6:37-39 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

John 10:28-30 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

2 Timothy 2:19 But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”

1 Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

What are some truths we find from the above scriptures?

But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us

These false teachers had gone out from among them and abandon the true doctrine of Christ. The antichrists mentioned here refers to those who were once among the saints. It was plain for all to see that they were not real Christians but only in name.

John 15:2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

Jude 1:19 It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

Those who demonstrate a Christ-like behavior are born of God. We are to live, love, and act like Christ.

1 Peter 2:21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Philippians 2:5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Why is it important to be aware of false teachers?

What is the application for our lives?

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.