

Children on God, in our age the spirit of antichrist is busy at work deceiving many people, convincing them to not trust the Bible as the truth of God, and to not believe in the Lord Jesus as The Christ, the one and only true way of salvation; but to believe that old lie of the devil, that we ourselves can become God. This lie is packaged in many ways, but the core lie behind it all is one that denies Jesus as the Christ. If we are going to remain steadfast and persevere in our faith amid the perpetual spiritual attacks of the evil one we must abide in the apostolic doctrines of Christ and remain in the that truth every day of our lives.

John begins this section saying: *Children of God, it is the last hour, and you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know it is the last hour.*

The last hour John is referring to is probably the last hour of the old covenant. The Temple and is about to be destroyed, the old covenant order is fading away, and Jesus prophesied that before these events happen false Christ's and false prophets would arise performing signs and wonders to lead astray the elect if possible. The false Christ's are the antichrists that John is referring to here, and I think that one of the chief antichrist's was probably Simon Magus.

Acts 8:9-10 says that Simon *previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. They all paid attention to him, from the least of them to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God which is called, 'Great.'* Now this might not seem like much, but early Christian writing seems to paint him as one of the arch villains of the apostles – the chief heretic, and the original teacher of gnostic and occult and magickal doctrines and practices.

Now, because we have all been influenced by Dispensationalism and the Left Behind series, any talk of the antichrist will conjure up images and thoughts of a great world leader, like Nicolai Carpathia, in the Left Behind

series, to take over the one world government, and usher forth the reign of the beast.

But before we let our imaginations take us too far a field, and we start to envision cobra helicopters and air gun ships as representing flying locusts with tails like a scorpion or anything like that, let us actually read what John says here. John says that in his day was the last hour, that antichrist is coming, and that many antichrists have already come.

So, this is primarily talking about something that was happening in his time. Does it have later implications for us? Of course it does. But when interpreting the Bible it is important to understand the immediate context first before we jump to apply the Bible to our own day.

The antichrists that John speaks of here, he says, "*went out from us.*" Here he is referring to the apostles. The antichrists went out from the apostles, but they were not of the apostles. Meaning, the antichrist's departed from the apostles physically, they were for a time a part of their group, but they had abandoned the apostles teaching and began to embrace and teach false doctrines.

Because they embraced and taught false doctrines and did not abide in the apostolic doctrine of Christ, *they were not of us*, he says. If they were of us, if they really were of the apostles, then they would have continued with us, they would have remained in the same teaching the apostles taught.

But they didn't, and so it is plain who is from the apostles and who is not. This is an indicator on whether or not a person is truly saved in Christ, and if a teacher is teaching the truth of Christ. Is the teacher in conformity with apostolic doctrine -the same doctrine of Christ the apostles taught, and do they continue in that teaching?

Now a key part of the false teaching that these antichrists were teaching and which was deceiving many, was a proto-Gnosticism. Proto, meaning this

was the first forms and beginnings of those ideas which would later become Full fledged Gnosticism. Gnosticism, in its heyday when it became a more fully formed system of belief taught this:

*"The supreme God dwelt in unapproachable splendour in this spiritual world, and had no dealings with the world of matter. Matter was the creation of an inferior being, the Demiurge. He, along with his aides the archōns, ("rulers" which is referencing the planets) kept mankind imprisoned within their material existence, and barred the path of individual souls trying to ascend to the spirit world after death. Not even this possibility was open to everyone, however. For only those who possessed a divine spark (pneuma) could hope to escape from their corporeal (bodily) existence. And even those possessing such a spark did not have an automatic escape, for they needed to receive the enlightenment of gnōsis before they could become aware of their own spiritual condition... In most of the Gnostic systems reported by the church Fathers, this enlightenment is the work of a divine redeemer, who descends from the spiritual world in disguise and is often equated with the Christian Jesus. Salvation for the Gnostic, therefore, is to be alerted to the existence of his divine pneuma and then, as a result of this knowledge, to escape on death from the material world to the spiritual."<sup>1</sup>*

The article I just read from spoke of the divine spark, but I think in the time of John, it was being referred to as the Anointing, the charisma. Remember, Jesus is the Anointed One, which is what Christ means. And Jesus warned there would be many false christs. John says there are many antichrists. So the idea of anointing/charisma, and of Christ is conceptually as well as linguistically connected, and therefore so is anti-christ.

Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be the Messiah. Christians were also anointed by the Spirit upon baptism. The Gnostics took that idea of

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<sup>1</sup> Zavada, Jack. "Gnosticism: Definition and Beliefs." Learn Religions, Feb. 8, 2021, learnreligions.com/what-is-gnosticism-700683.

the anointing that Christians received upon their baptisms, and they twisted it to their own agenda. It seems the antichrists were teaching that what was needed was for them to experience their own anointing in order to get the special knowledge needed to escape the bondage physical creation, was their own special anointing which comes from acquiring knowledge of the divine within you.

I think this makes sense of John's statement when he says, in contrast: "*But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you have all knowledge.*" He is telling these Christians that they do not need some other anointing in order to receive some secret hidden knowledge of the divine in them in order to be saved from the physical creation and enter into the spirit realm. No. That is a false gnostic lie about what Jesus the true Christ came to do.

Jesus Christ did not come to release us from the bondage of the prison of the physical body, he came to release us from the bondage of sin. He did not come to give us secret esoteric knowledge about how we are actually all one with the divine. He came to give us the true and plain knowledge of God through Jesus Christ.

And yet how many people in our day think that in their view salvation is to be freed from the burden of the body and of biological reality, and /or become enlightened with mystical knowledge through various experiences, and to become one with the divine.

This is part of the deception behind transgenderism, for example, in which a person deceives themselves into thinking they can choose to be freed from the confines and the prison of their biological physical body, by merely thinking they are something other than what their biological reality tells them. They say they are a man trapped in a woman's body. And so in order to be their true selves, in order to be free, they must come to believe that their true self has to be released from the physical.

Not only that, but also the idol of ideological political activism such as those who are woke also believe that to be saved you must come to be a part of their distinct group and adopt their secret knowledge of the evil of white supremacy. Once you do this you are now in the In Group, and you are saved. And even worse, BLM, for example, is also based on witchcraft and occult practices.

Conspiracy theorists also tend to fall into this trap as well. While the woke say they are woke, those in the conspiracy realm have been claiming to be awake for decades prior. To be truly awake you have to know who the illuminati is, and the Bilderberg group, and the New World Order, and all that, until your spiritual health and salvation is almost completely wrapped up in deciphering the newest conspiracies.

And worst of all, is the New Age beliefs which intermingle through many if not all of these beliefs and practices. Many in the conspiracy world promote the idea that there is coming a new spiritual awakening as we are entering into the Age of Aquarius. There are even those in the UFO Alien scene who are advocating contacting the aliens through prayer and meditation, calling upon them to save us from our collective selves.

You may laugh at some of these. But I am telling you, these gnostic and occult beliefs, and practices which also deny the goodness of the body and which seek to escape the flesh are so widespread and have become a part of almost everyday conversation in the mainstream, you might be hard pressed to not find someone who hasn't had their mind shaped by some of these ideas. Oprah has been pushing this for years now. And in advertisement, for example, if some company want to give the image of spirituality, what will they show, a white girl in yoga pants sitting in the lotus position meditating.

Occult beliefs and practices are pushed everywhere in our culture today, especially online. New Ageism is nothing less than various degrees of occult

Gnosticism and satanism and the magick arts and dark rituals, where people are encouraged to embrace the secret truth that they are divine, and that they have the potential to unlock their divine spark, become one with cosmic consciousness.

There are videos and books where people are taught occult practices of how to empty their mind and open themselves up to the spirits and powers of the universe so that they can become enlightened and experience cosmic consciousness. And, since I am known for saying controversial things, I won't let my reputation fail, this is also the driving idea behind yoga. Yoga is Hinduism and Hinduism is yoga. Which really is the practice of worshiping yourself as god – realizing you are one with Brahman. Which is to say, that yoga, and many of these other occult practices are nothing less than demonism.

Now in John's day, there was undoubtedly some pretty crazy things going on and people were trying to deceive Christians. But John appeals to their belief in Christ as the standard and ground of the truth. He says, *I write to you not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and no lie is of the truth.*"

And what is the truth? That the eternal life took on flesh and blood, and that the apostles touched him, and handled, him, and saw him, and heard him and they had fellowship with him and with Father. Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. And he came down from Heaven to die on the cross to forgive us of our sins. It is by the forgiveness of sins that we have true knowledge of God. This is the anointing which unites us to Christ and from which we receive the Holy Spirit at baptism.

These Christians that John is writing to are being deceived into thinking that they need to receive some secret anointing through magickal occult practices and gnostic rituals and secrets in order to gain true knowledge and true anointing. But John is telling them that they already have all the

knowledge that is necessary for salvation because their sins are forgiven in Jesus Christ and they are united to Him in His death, resurrection, and ascension.

Hence the anointing they received is most likely a reference to their baptism, where Christians are united to Christ, and where they were anointed by the Holy Spirit, who seals to them the promise of the forgiveness of sins in Christ's blood, which opens up the way to have true knowledge of God.

So John continues and asks, "*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.*" Gnostic and occult religions and practices make forgiveness of sins meaningless. Our greatest problem, as the gnostics would tell us, is that we lack the secret knowledge of the divine within us, and that what we need is to escape from the confines of the physical and become one with the spiritual.

But that would mean that Jesus is not the Christ. Jesus, whose name means salvation, was anointed, became the Christ, when the Spirit anointed him at His baptism to give his life as a ransom for many. If you believe in Gnosticism, if you believe that salvation comes from secret knowledge, and by escaping the body, and through occult rituals and magick, then you are denying that Jesus is the Christ, and you are your own Christ. You are your own salvation.

And if you deny the Son, you deny the Father as well. But whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. And this is what many need to hear today. The belief that there are many other paths that can bring us to a more fuller knowledge of God, and that you can have greater spiritual experiences, and that these are all acceptable to God, these are lies from the Devil. This is the spirit of Antichrist. Don't buy it. It is not from the Father. If it denies the Son, then you do not have the Father. It is plain and simple, thank the Lord.

Certainly, there is much to learn about in the world of spirituality. And I guarantee you will learn things in spirituality that you will not learn in from Christianity. But that doesn't mean it is good knowledge to have. The appeal is for people of our age, especially the young, is everyone is seeking an experience. This is why charismatic Christianity is so popular. Sure, you may have a spiritual experience, but that doesn't mean it was a good spirit you were in contact with. "Oh but I felt so good and happy." I bet you did. Don't you know that the devil can disguise himself an angel of light.

The safest bet is to stick with the truth that you have heard from the beginning. Do not stray from the Jesus Christ of the Bible, and the Apostolic doctrines which you heard from the beginning. The Apostle Paul says: For even if an angel from Heaven should preach to you any other gospel contrary to the one you received from us, let him be accursed.

Thus John says, *"Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise he made to us – eternal life."*

There are many false teachings out there that try to get you to believe that the biggest problem you have is anything else other than the need for forgiveness of sins. New Age teaching, which are of the Devil and demons – teach, as the Gnostics of old, that your greatest problem is ignorance of your own divine essence. You do not need to repent, you need to be enlightened. You need to develop your conscious self, your Christ consciousness, Nirvana, Brahman, self awareness, and that comes about through various means. Meditation, chanting, aligning your chakras through Yoga, maybe even very disciplined diets, definitely doing Hallucinogenic drugs and herbs, like DMT and Ayahuasca, maybe even Ouija boards to contact your spirit guides, which is of course demonism.

Now I know that a lot of what these people who teach these things sounds good. I know the power and influence that certain people and teachings

have in shaping the ideas we have of the truth. But if what they are saying does not line up with the basic truth of the Christian faith and apostolic message of those who walked and talked and ate and drank and saw and heard and touched Jesus, if the message these new teachers are teaching does not have at its core that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in the flesh and He died to forgive you of your sins, it is a lie! They are antichrist's, and they are not telling you the truth.

Even if 99% of what they are saying is true, that 1% where they deny that Jesus is the Christ, they are to be rejected and not believed. They are antichrist.

This is why 1 John was written. He says, "*I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.*" And there are people and demonic spirits trying to deceive you. Therefore you need to test the spirits, John will say later on. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God.

The problem is that so many cults and religions and spiritualities exist today that pay lip service to Jesus, and teach he was a great moral teacher, he was the one who experienced Christ consciousness, he was a prophet, he was a yogi, a guru, he was a spirit that seemed like he had a body, he was an angel, he was the first of God's creations, he was a political revolutionary. Whatever.

Some people even report talking to spirit guides, they report talking to angels, they report talking to aliens or machine elves, or whatever. And you can tell right away if this thing is trying to deceive you by asking it who Jesus Christ is. That is the test. Is Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God come in the flesh to die for our sins, raised from the dead, ascended into Heaven to sit above all the angels and demons and every earthly and spiritual power in heaven and earth. If they do not confess that that is who Jesus Christ is, then they are trying to deceive you. You are talking to devils.

John give his readers the remedy for the threat of spiritual apostasy which comes from the deceptive teachings of antichrist. He says:

*“But the anointing you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie – just as it has been taught to you, abide in Him.”*

Abide in Him. The spirit who anointed Jesus anointed you and He teaches you about everything. But not “everything”, everything. The Spirit doesn’t give you supernatural knowledge of quantum physics or calculus. God’s anointing Spirit teaches you everything you need to know to have eternal life and to live a life of godliness. Thus, 2 Pet. 1:3 says, *His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue.*

You do not need to continue to seek out more truth outside of Christ. All the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are hidden, where? In Christ Jesus. So, abide in Him. Abide means to remain. Remain in Christ by continually abiding and remaining in the truth that you know of Christ now and continue to grow in that truth. I guarantee you that the little bit of Christ and the Bible you know now is enough to keep you occupied for the rest of your life.

You will not exhaust all the implications and grow out of the small amount of scripture that you know right now. And that is ok. You don’t need to seek out new things all the time. And neither do you need to hear something new, all the time. Don’t be like the Athenians. What you need, children of God, is to hear the old, old story of Jesus and the cross, and you need to live there. If you have a desire to have greater knowledge and understanding about the deeper things of God in Christ, you can search out greater meanings of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. You can satisfy your curiosity in Christ.

But if you depart from Christ, and you refuse to abide in Him and in the apostolic teaching, then you are joining the ranks of the antichrist's.

Children of God I urge you to be on guard against all manners of false deceptive teachings in our day. They are lies and are of the devil which he has crafted in his deceitfulness to lead astray the elect, if it were possible. Therefore reject antichrist, and abide in the true and living Christ. Amen.