

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. I would like to invite you to take God's Word and turn to 1 John chapter 2.
2. This morning we are looking at the second half of verse 18 and verse 19.
3. Read 1 John 2:18-19.
4. In our last two studies together in this letter, we looked at "The Antichrist" that is "coming."
5. Today we are going to look at the "many antichrists" that "have come."
6. One refers to a future false ruler.

7. The other identifies the spirit that pervades false teachers.
8. They are also called “antichrists.”
9. That is because they oppose Christ and His teachings.
10. 1 John 2:22-23 (NASB) Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? *This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 23*  
Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.
11. So the term “antichrists,” “refers to a principle of evil, incarnated in men, who are hostile and opposed to God (cf. 2 Cor. 10:4, 5)” (MacArthur, John, *The MacArthur*

*Study Bible).*

12. John therefore says in 1 John 4:1 (NASB) Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, *because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*
13. So John helps his readers by telling them that “many antichrists have come.”
14. Peter employs this same approach in 2 Peter 2:1 (NASB) *But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you,* who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

15. Jesus says believers need to Beware of false teachers in Matthew 7:15.
16. To Beware (prosecho) means “to be on one’s guard, be cautious or wary about, or be alert to.”
17. There are two things John wants his readers to understand about these antichrists.

First...

## **LESSON**

### **I. Many Antichrists Have Come (v.18b)**

“Not just one, but the exponents of the Gnostic teaching are really antichrists, just as some modern deceivers deserve this

title” (AT Robertson).

## A. Many Indicates More Than One Has Come

1. The source behind false teachers is Satan
2. He appears in the Garden of Eden with Eve (Gen.3:1-6)
3. His first lie to Eve was “You surely will not die” (v.4)
4. God said in Genesis 2:16-17 (NASB) *The Lord God commanded the man,* saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day

that you eat from it *you will surely die.*”

5. Genesis 3:6 reveals Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit.
6. Genesis 5:5 (NASB) So all the days that *Adam* lived were nine hundred and thirty years, *and he died.*
7. Satan is the father of lies - John 8:44 (NASB) You are of your father *the devil*, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for *he is a liar and the father of lies.*

8. He propagates his lies about God and uses unbelievers to preach it
  9. Jesus says Satan's preachers disguise themselves in the clothing of a shepherd but "inwardly are ravenous wolves" (Mat.7:15)
- B. Their Appearance Also Indicates It is the Last Hour

"From this we know that it is the last hour"

1. Matthew 24:5 (NASB) For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

2. This is the opening of the first seal in Revelation 6:4-5.
3. During the last 3 ½ years of the “great tribulation,” Matthew 24:24 (NASB) *For false Christs and false prophets will arise* and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.
4. This is the last hour but according to 1 John 2:18, the appearance of false teachers also indicates this being the last hour.

John MacArthur says that the last hour is that period between the first and second coming of Christ.

## **II. Many Antichrists Have Left (v.19)**



## A. They Went Out From Us

1. “Went out” (exerchomai), “to go out, to leave, to depart”
2. They depart from the faithful. They arise from within the church and depart from true fellowship and lead people out with them” (MacArthur, John, *The MacArthur Study Bible*).
3. Acts 20:27-31 (NASB) For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 I know that after my departure

savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

## B. They Were Not of Us

1. Their departure indicates their true heart
2. This “suggests that the movement involved was not formal excommunication but voluntary secession from the fellowship” (Smalley, Stephen S. Word Biblical

Commentary).

3. They follow after “ungodly lusts” (Jude 1:18)
4. They “cause divisions” (Jude 1:19)
5. They are “worldly-minded” (Jude 1:19)
6. They do not have “the Spirit” (Jude 1:19)
7. Romans 8:9 says “if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”
8. If they loved believers they would have remained with them

9. But their departure shows they were never part of the true church of Jesus Christ

10. “The heretics “withdrew” from the congregation; but, in the eyes of the orthodox members, they had never really belonged to it” (Smalley).

John Calvin says, “By saying, *They went out from us*, he means that they had previously occupied a place in the Church, and were counted among the number of the godly. He, however, denies that they were of them, though they had assumed the name of believers, as chaff though mixed with wheat on the same floor cannot yet be deemed wheat” (Calvin’s Commentaries).

11. If they were saved, they would have persevered

12. 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 (NASB) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, *if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.*

13. Colossians 1:22-23 (NASB) yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—  
23 *if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of*

the gospel that you have heard,  
which was proclaimed in all creation  
under heaven, and of which I, Paul,  
was made a minister.

14. “They went out, so that it would be  
manifest that none of them were of  
us” (NKJV).

15. They never belonged to the church  
because they denied Jesus as the  
Christ.

16. 1 John 2:22 (NASB) Who is the liar  
but the one who denies that Jesus is  
the Christ? This is the antichrist, the  
one who denies the Father and the  
Son.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. What can we learn from this today?
2. There is a coming world ruler--The Antichrist.
3. But there are also “many antichrists” in the world today.
4. They came from inside the church.
5. Just because you are a member of a church doesn't mean you're a member of Christ.
6. You could be in here today posing as a Christian but are a deceiver, an antichrist.

7. In the words of 2 Corinthians 13:5 (NASB)  
Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?
8. We also learn today that perseverance is a mark of genuine salvation.
9. If you're genuinely saved, you will continue in the faith.
10. Let's pray.