

1 John: Part 7 – Know God – Guard Against Antichrists

We can know that we know God when we hold to the truth and guard against antichrists. During His ministry, Christ prepared believers for the last days and the rise of false teachers and antichrists. During the closing years of John's life, many false teachers denied Christ and preached against the deity of the Lord. Their teaching was beginning to have a devastating impact on those who listened to their messages. It was necessary for John to address these false doctrines and encourage the true message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are far removed from John's time but antichrists still abound. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is still the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes.

How does guarding against antichrists figure in to knowing that you really know God?

Due to the deception of false teachers and prophets, and deceitful works, we need to know the truth that is in Christ. What is false is in direct contradiction to what is true, and if you don't know the difference, you don't really know God. Are you guarding against antichrists? This is a test of our relationship with God and His Word. Listen to his warning.

1 John 2:18 NKJV Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

John's warning is to the believers. **He says:** "*Little children... the Antichrist is coming.*" False teachers were denying the truth about Christ. Some were saying Jesus was not the Christ and were denying His miracles, life, death and resurrection. Jesus said, "The spirit of antichrist is already working in the world and in the last days many false teachers will arise."

Matthew, Mark and Luke present Jesus' warning about the troubles that would come.

Matthew 24:7-8 NKJV For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Matthew 24:11-13 NKJV Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 24:24 NKJV For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Both the Apostles Paul and John took up this warning. Jesus' warning was already materializing in their day.

1 John 2:18 NKJV Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

What does, "It is the last hour" mean? The rise of antichrists within the early church was a sign of the beginning of the end of all things.

Antichrist comes from two Greek words. Anti - means against or instead of. Christos - means "anointed one." *Antichrists* refer to those who were seeking to take the place of Christ or offer a substitute to Christ and His message.

1 Timothy 4:1 NKJV Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons...

Several antichrists can appear upon the scene any time with seducing doctrines and deception. A personal Antichrist, a man of sin, will arise and oppose Christ more than

anyone else. There have been many who have opposed Christ. While Jesus was ministering on earth, many opposed Him, His teaching and miracles.

2 John 1:7 NKJV For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

1 John 2:18 is referring to both 'the Antichrist' and many who come against Christ. The person the prophets spoke of will arise as a world leader. He is a counterfeit Christ that Satan will reveal in the last days. He will not call himself the antichrist, but will present himself as the real Christ (hope and salvation) and the fulfillment of prophecies.

Antichrist personifies anti-Christian political and religious ideas that characterize end-time apostasy. The Antichrist will exalt himself above God. We can know with certainty that the Antichrist will come. There is a difference in the Antichrist and Jesus Christ.

How do we know that it is the last hour and that Jesus Christ is about to return? We have been given many signs of the times. John tells us "many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour." The coming of antichrists, false teachers, and false prophets is a sign that we are in the last hour. This is still occurring today.

John's *emphasis upon many is a testimony of the last days*. In the "last hour," the world will be overflowing with false teachers, prophets, and leaders. John said: "We know that it is the last time." We know because many are denying Jesus Christ.

They are denying His deity. Jesus is the Son of God who came out of heaven. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life. He vicariously died to atone for our sins. He triumphantly arose from the dead. He ascended back to the right hand of God in heaven.

There is a constant message today that questions and denies that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and the Messiah. Jesus warned that this would happen.

Mark 13:22 NKJV For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

This message is pertinent to every believer.

1 Timothy 4:1–2 NKJV Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ²speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

John is not only warning about the Antichrist, he is warning about false teachers and prophets. We must be aware of what happens outside of the church, but we need to know and recognize what false teachers and prophets do within the church.

1 John 2:19 NKJV 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 they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

John says: "*They went out from us, but they were not of us.*" They were within the church but they were not true believers.

1 Timothy 4:1–2 Living Bible But the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some in the church will turn away from Christ and become eager followers of teachers with devil-inspired ideas. These teachers will tell lies with straight faces and do it so often that their consciences won't even bother them.

2 Timothy 4:3–4 NKJV For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

When we know that great deception and false teaching will arise, we need to protect ourselves. Then John tells us how to protect against antichrists.

1 John 2:20–21 NKJV But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. ²¹I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

We should never become careless or presumptuous in our faith and knowledge of God.

God gives the believer two protections.

First, God gives true believers an anointing.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is critical for the church. *What is the anointing that He gives?* The anointing is the result of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 1:21–22 NKJV Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, ²²who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Why does God give us the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is given to comfort, guide, instruct, sanctify, seal, illuminate, quicken, and give power for life. We cannot survive this last hour without the Holy Spirit. We all need the Holy Spirit's anointing, presence, and help.

John 14:26 NLT But when the Father sends the ***Counselor*** as my representative—and **BY THE COUNSELOR I MEAN THE HOLY SPIRIT**—***He will teach you everything*** and will remind you of everything I myself have told you.

What does **EVERYTHING** mean? “Everything” means that the Holy Spirit will expose and reveal what is true or false about Jesus Christ. There is no excuse for any believer being misled by false teachers or a false prophet. God has given the Holy Spirit to protect and instruct us. The Holy Spirit is a present help to identify and testify of truth and falsehood.

Second, God gives the truth to the believer. He gives us the truth in two ways.

First, God gives us the truth that is in Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of truth, and shows us what God the Father is like. If you want to know God, you have to know Jesus Christ. Do you see how dangerous it is if a believer becomes deceived about the truth? If you really know Jesus Christ, there is no excuse for you to be led astray by false teachers or antichrists.

Second, God gives us the truth in the Word of God.

John 8:31–32 NKJV Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*”

2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

We must be students of the Word of God. God's Word reveals the truth, and the truth makes us free. There is no excuse for a believer to ever be misled by antichrists or false teachers. You have been given these two aids to keep you in the truth and to not be deceived by false teachers or false prophets. Some are deceived because the message or the messenger is attractive or appealing. They are led astray by a charismatic or moving appeal. Some proposed sign, wonder or miracle deceives their heart and leads them from the truth. No matter how much we may like a person, or the excitement of the appeal, any doctrine or instruction that differs from the Word of God is a lie. If it is not from or in

harmony with the Word of God, it is not of the truth and it is a deception. We do not have to add to the work of the Holy Spirit or the Word of God. This lays an enormous obligation upon each of us. We must study the Word of God and we must pray and seek the leadership of the Spirit of God.

What is the major theme of antichrists and false teachers?

1 John 2:22-23 NKJV Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Jesus Christ is the center of the believer's life and faith. Denying the deity of Jesus Christ is the same thing as denying the Father. No one can truly worship God while denying His Son.

1 John 2:24 NKJV Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

The message of the Gospel that was preached from the beginning is still relevant and true today. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to save sinners. If Jesus is not the Christ, the Bible is changed, falsified, and inaccurate. As falsehoods and antichrists abound, we must hold steadfast to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our hope and sure foundation depends on this truth. The Word of God has the power and authority to defeat the powers of darkness that seek to destroy your life and faith.

Colossians 2:6 NKJV As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

1 John 2:6 NKJV He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

This is the standard that protects us in perilous times.

1 John 2:25-26 NKJV And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you.

The good news is God sent His only Son into the world to save us by dying for our sins. We cannot have eternal life without knowing God and His Son, Jesus Christ. This is why this Gospel message is so important and why Satan is doing everything he can to rob you of the truth that has so much power. Anyone who denies Jesus Christ is denying the Father, His love, and the only solution for sin. If what we have heard from the beginning remains in us, we will remain in the Son and in the Father.

This message is very pertinent for believers who face test, trials, and tribulations.

In verse 27, John reemphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit.

1 John 2:27 NKJV But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

The importance of the Holy Spirit is seen in this verse. In the moment when the truth is being tested, the anointing you have received gives a testimony of what is true.

In John 16:13 NKJV Jesus said: However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.