

GNITN

#210

Resisting The Antichrist Spirit

Changing Focus

In the last video that I talked about the Antichrist I made the case for not trying to figure out who the Antichrist really is. While I did make a small case for musing about who the man of sin will be, overall such endeavors are not helping us to do what we need to do overall and that is to fulfill the Great Commission. I can see a little speculation on who the Antichrist really is but leave it there for the most part. As we get closer and closer to the Tribulation we need to focus more and more on the important things because I believe that we really are in the last of the last days and the end of the end times. One Christian I talked with recently said an evangelism teacher told the class he was in that winning the lost at any cost it the only thing we should be doing. Nothing else is on the same level of urgency. I totally agree, however as a body has many parts, so does the body of Christ and we should allow Holy Spirit to show us the role we play in the plan to evangelize. In any event, knowing exactly who the Antichrist is really losing your focus. But, not to worry, I'll give you something else to do that will more than scratch that itch for you and will lead to far more productive things.

A Lot Of Antichrist Stuff Around Now

Yes, I called it stuff. Stuff that the Antichrist would be doing if he could, stuff like pushing abortion and promoting sinful lifestyles and making people think it is good and not evil. And encouraging these same people to call good, righteous living as evil and harmful. Yeah, that kind of stuff. You won't know a person who plays that role in a true sense of things, but you can see many, many false teachers and prophets filling that role in many ways and in many places. Do I need to name names now? I could, but that's not the point of this little endeavor. The point is found in **1 John 4:3**:

...every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. (1 John 4:3, NKJV)

And every spirit that does not say Jesus has come in a human body is not from God. It is the teaching of the false-christ. You have heard that this teaching is coming. It is already here in the world. (NLV)

But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here. (NLT)

If not, the message is not from God but from one who is against Christ, like the "Antichrist" you have heard about who is going to come, and his attitude of enmity against Christ is already abroad in the world. (TLB)

And everyone who refuses to confess faith in Jesus has nothing in common with God. This is the spirit of antichrist that you heard was coming. Well, here it is, sooner than we thought! (MSG)

I decided to show it all these translations to make the point and that is if you want to spend anytime on the topic of the Antichrist, spend it on detecting the Antichrist spirit. You won't need to actually encounter the Son of Perdition himself to be about your Father's business.

How Do You Detect The Antichrist Spirit?

Going back to **1 John 4:3** we read exactly what we need to know:

And every spirit which does not acknowledge and confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh [but would annul, destroy, sever, disunite Him] is not of God [does not proceed from Him]. This [nonconfession] is the [spirit] of the antichrist... (AMPC)

Not recognizing Jesus as the messiah is one part of the equation. We need to look at another verse from **1 John** to add to our ability to discern this spirit:

And who is the greatest liar? The one who says that Jesus is not Christ. Such a person is antichrist, for he does not believe in God the Father and in his Son. 23 For a person who doesn't believe in Christ, God's Son, can't have God the Father either. But he who has Christ, God's Son, has God the Father also. (1 John 2:22-23, TLB)

It is both a prideful and a lying spirit then. Here is how Bible teacher Michael Youssef, Ph.D. explains it:

John writes, "Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son" (1 John 2:22). What does it mean to deny that Jesus is the Christ? Anyone who teaches that Jesus is one of many ways to God is an antichrist with a small a. Anyone who denies Jesus' claim to be the only way to God the Father is an antichrist with a small a. Anyone who says that Buddha or the Mahdi or Krishna is just another name for Jesus is an antichrist with a small a.

A Deceiving And Attractive Spirit

For false Christs shall arise, and false prophets, and will do wonderful miracles so that if it were possible, even God's chosen ones would be deceived. (Matt 24:24, TLB)

Deceptions that are so good as to be able to lead away even the strongest believer are very strong. The Antichrist spirit has only been getting stronger and stronger since the Bible was completed by the first century church. And the one behind it all, Satan has had a lot of time to refine that spirit. He always has pastors and teachers who he can use to preach the false doctrines and write commentaries on scripture that water down or even totally rewrite the Bible. Even trusted translations can be corrupted over time as culture demands to have a god who will bow to their whims and promote their lifestyles. Youssef goes on to write this:

I believe Satan is infecting many churches today with false teachings in order to prepare the way for the Antichrist. When the Antichrist comes, he will be hard to recognize as the Antichrist. He will be attractive and charming. Jesus said that "false messiahs" will come, performing "great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (Matthew 24:24). So we must be alert and put on the whole armor of God, being grounded in the Truth—God's Word.

What Do You Do When You Detect That Spirit?

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. (2 Thess 2:7, NKJV)

We must play our part in the restraining mentioned by the Apostle Paul in the verse above since it is more than just Holy Spirit dwelling inside of us, it is Him giving us the anointing and power, and the wisdom to know how to specifically restrain the plans of the Antichrist spirit. It isn't up to us as individuals to take his plans down. Yes, we need to impact those in our circle of influence and then add our individual talents and abilities to help all the children of God to be an active and effective restraining force. We need to increase His presence by adding Christians to

our numbers. That's a simple way to have more restraining power on the earth. New believers should also walk in the spirit, adding their restraining to the fighting, so discipleship is added to the mix. And we need to diversify what areas of culture we influence and not restrict ourselves to just the Church or religious world. Being part of politics, the arts, education, the family, media, and business not to rule over them, but to provide salt and light in them.

Filling The Vacuums

The old adage that nature abhors a vacuum fits here. A lot of pastors and leaders are loath to encourage their flocks to get involved in public schools or to run for public office. They don't actively push them to aspire to be leaders in their jobs as well. And need I remind us that complaining about the moral decay in the arts and entertainment world without getting involved in changing it is a terrible strategy. Yes it is true that these areas are much better at changing believers than we are good at changing them, and yes it is true that the prince of the power of the air is very adept at corrupting even solid Christians, those facts shouldn't let the difficulty of the task keep us outside these areas altogether. We used to dominate quite a few of these influential areas and by willfully leaving them in part or in whole, the vacuums created by those decisions were filled by doctrines and influences of demons. We need to take back as much of that territory as we can. And we need to do that quickly. Leave who knows who the Antichrist is to people living in the Tribulation. Our harvest field is right here and right now. And the tough but necessary job of making the fields ready for planting good seeds and then working to help them grow is more than enough to keep us busy. Let us be about our Fathers business, Church!