

The Antichrist

There is ongoing war in Eastern Europe that threatens to spread to other countries. Certain powerful world leaders have turned out to be unpredictable in their relationship with their friends and allies. The world economic order is shaking as trade agreements are ignored and the international rule of law is being tossed aside by the very people who worked to establish that in the first place. Memories of the pandemic, and fears of another one coming leave people feeling vulnerable. There is definitely an increased interest in the Biblical teachings of the End Times as the world becomes less stable than it was recently, and many Christians get the sense that we are living at the end of the age. There is a particular interest in the antichrist as we get frequent reminders of how, even in our modern world, individuals can amass great power and almost single-handedly change the world.

I. What the term covers.

A. The Antichrist in a *non-specific* sense.

The most common idea of the antichrist is that it refers to a specific person. The term actually does not have to be that specific.

1. Luke 11:23. Who can be considered to be an antichrist according to this passage?
2. Galatians 1:8, 2 Peter 2:1-3, Matthew 24:24. What are the marks of the antichrist in this sense of the antichrist?
3. 1 John 2:22, 2 John 7. In a nutshell, who is an antichrist?
4. 1 John 4:3. Is the antichrist in this sense just a person, or could it be an idea or a way of thinking?

B. The antichrist in a *specific* sense.

- 1 John 2:18. What does this passage add to the concept of the antichrist?

II. The marks of the antichrist

A. His conflict over and against God

1. Revelation 17:14. What does this say about what he thinks of God's authority?
2. Daniel 8:10-12. What does this say about his level of respect toward God?

B. His tactics

1. Revelation 13:12. Who is his main ally?

2. Revelation 13:13-14. What is his main tool of persuasion?
3. What are his goals in the following situations?
Revelation 13:8
1 Timothy 4:1
John 16:2-3

C. His base

1. John 12:31. Where is his home base at this time?
2. 2 Thessalonians 2:4. Where is his power centred?

D. His end

1. Revelation 19:19-20. What will happen to him when Jesus comes again?
2. Revelation 20:10. How long will this judgement last?
3. Matthew 24:9-14. What should we never forget if we are worried by the teachings about the antichrist?

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Luther's response to people who taught that the antichrist should be opposed with political and military means:

But in no way do I want these words about destruction and extirpation to mean that the fist and the sword should be used, for the followers of the antichrist are not worthy of such punishment, nor is anything attained by it. On the contrary, as Dan 8:25 teaches, the antichrist is to be destroyed without hands by everybody's speaking and teaching against him with God's Word until he is put to shame, and deserted and deposed, goes to ruin. This is the true Christian destroying in which we should engage with all our energy.

First of all, it should be known that although these signs of Judgement Day are manifold and great, they will nonetheless be so performed that no one or very few will pay any attention to them and regard them as such signs. For these two developments will and must be conjoined and the two are also linked together by Christ and the Apostles in their prediction: the first that many and great signs are to come, the second that, despite this fact Judgement Day will come so unexpectedly from its very beginning that the world never expects it less than at the very time it stands before the door.

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