

The Responsibility of Making Right Choices Politically

II Thessalonians 2:1-12

I. How Does the Bible Describe the Anti-Christ?

A. Descriptions.

1. I Jn 2:18, 22 - Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. . . Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist — he denies the Father and the Son. **He denies Jesus is the Christ.**
2. I Jn 4:3 - Every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. **He denies Jesus is from God.**
3. II Jn 7 - Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. **He denies Jesus coming in the flesh & is a deceiver.**

B. He is the complete opposite of the Lord.

Lord Jesus	The Anti-Christ
1. Act 3:14 - Personified as righteousness	v3 - Personified as lawlessness (unrighteousness).
2. Act 3:15 - Author of life.	v3 - Doomed to destruction.
3. Lk 22:42 - Submitted to the Father's will.	v4 - Opposes God, exalts himself & calls himself God.
4. Gal 4:4 - Revealed at the right time.	v6 - Revealed at the right time.
5. Rom 16:25-26 - Existed as a mystery, then a revelation.	v6 & 8 - Exist as a mystery, then a revelation.
6. Jn 5:46 - Concealed in the Law & became the personification of the Law.	v7-8 - Begins as lawless to become the lawless one.
7. v8 - Will return.	v9 - Will return.
8. v9 & Eph 1:19-20 - Came as a working of God with signs.	v9 - Comes as a working of Satan with false signs.
9. v10 - Brought the gospel of truth with salvation.	v10 - Will bring a false gospel for destruction.
10. v11-12 - Kingdom rests on faith in truth.	v11-12 - Kingdom rests on faith in deception.

II. How Has History Described the Anti-Christ?

A. What has been the traditional Protestant understanding?

1. The Reformation was a Protestant movement - protesting the Roman Church.
 - a. Whenever you protest against something, your focus is on what you're protesting.
 - b. In this case, it was the Pope & the authority he exerted over everyone's life.

2. To them, the papacy was the Anti-Christ. What was the reasoning?
 - a. The Roman Church always had one man as it's supreme authority.
 - b. **v3** - That one man came from an apostasy (a falling away) - the Roman Church.
 - c. **v7** - The apostasy was restrained by a person (Caesar) when Paul was writing this.
 - d. **v7** - The church Bishops were already setting up the Roman Church while secular Rome was still in control of this restraint.
 - e. **v7b-8a** - When the restraint was taken away, the popes appeared.
 - f. **v4** - The popes were called, "Our Lord God the Pope, another God upon earth".
 - g. **v4** - The popes sit in the Temple of God (the church), reigning over it.

B. What is another possible understanding?

1. Reasons the papacy may not be the Anti-Christ.
 - a. The Pope claims that Jesus is the Christ, contrary to **I Jn 2:22**.
 - b. Popes have existed than 1500 years & the Lord hasn't come yet, so the time element isn't there.
2. Reasons why this may be a future event.
 - a. Morals are getting worse & society is becoming more indifferent to faith.
 - b. Atheism is becoming more acceptable.
 - c. Others in history have also claimed to be God or Christ: Sun Myung Moon (Unification Church).

III. How Does Understanding This Become Important to You?

A. It's very likely the Anti-Christ will be swept into power by popular opinion.

1. This is what happened with Adolph Hitler.
2. **ILL: Germany before the Third Reich take over.**

B. That's why it's important for you to vote wisely for government leaders.

1. We are experiencing now the result of "romantic" elections!
2. **ILL: President Obama's romantic appeal leading to his election.**
3. **ILL: We Californians elected the terminator as governor.**

C. That's why it's important for you to vote wisely for church leaders.

1. You must be very wise about electing people to be authorities over you.
 - a. When choosing occupations or employment, think of relationships at work as well as the income you'll make. The person you work for can make your life a joy or make it miserable!
 - b. Single women - watch rebounds & choose your boyfriends carefully. **ILL: Our daughter's vulnerability right now.**
 - c. Elders in this church will have spiritual authority over you. Elect them wisely!
 - d. **ILL: Ministers' meeting last Monday where one pastor commented on an immature elder.**
2. Our election of church leaders will happen in December.
 - a. Take this seriously.
 - b. Pleasing personality, popularity & enthusiasm for ministry is not enough.
 - c. Know what God's word says about qualifications & role of church leaders.

It's far more damaging having to deal
with poorly elected church leaders
than it is to elect them in the first place.

Study the word!
Take this seriously!
Vote intelligently!