

Let's turn in our Bibles to 1 John 2 and v.18 (repeat). Welcome back to our series on "the study of last things," or, "the study of the end times." And what's the word? **Eschatology**.

But first, **2 Timothy 3:1** *But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.* Difficult for whom? Us, those who are in Christ.

<sup>2</sup> *For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,*

<sup>3</sup> *unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,*

<sup>4</sup> *treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,*

<sup>5</sup> *holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.* (2 Tim. 3:1-5 NAU)

The last days will be difficult for the church but kind of fun and exciting for the ones Paul describes in this passage. The world lives in a different world than the one you and I live in. They think differently. They behave differently. They believe differently. They serve a different god than the one we serve. That's going to make it difficult for the disciples of Christ. We're witnessing that now, in the present. Some of our leading politicians have referred to those who believe in Jesus and who believe in prayer as insane. And in light of our text this morning, it makes sense. **1 John 2:18:**

<sup>18</sup> *Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.*

<sup>19</sup> *They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.*

<sup>20</sup> *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.*

<sup>21</sup> *I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.*

<sup>22</sup> *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.*

<sup>23</sup> *Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also. (1 Jn. 2:18-23 NAU)*

**So, Lets talk about time**

<sup>18</sup> *Children, it is the last hour*; Notice that John puts it as an indisputable fact. “It is the last hour.” That is reality. That’s where we are and have been since the Lord Jesus ascended back to the Father.

<sup>18</sup> *Children, it is the last what? It is the last “hour.”*

Are you familiar with the notorious “dooms day clock?” It isn’t a real clock but it’s the way a group of scientists informs the world each January about the risk of the world either blowing itself up or climate changes fatal consequences and how close to reaching that end this planet is. “The Clock represents the hypothetical global catastrophe as "midnight" and the scientists’ opinion on how close the world is to a global catastrophe. The main factors influencing the Clock are nuclear risk and global warming (climate change). The Closest the Doomsday Clock Has Been to Midnight is **two minutes**, reached in 1953 and again in 2018; while the furthest it’s ever been is 17 minutes in 1991, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.” There is a mock clock that these scientists use as a visual to show interested parties where the hands are now in reference to midnight.

The divine clock is ticking and it is now the last hour. The end is near.

But preachers and naysayers have been saying that for 2,000 years. It became a joke during Billy Graham’s early years as an evangelist when cartoons started showing up in newspapers picturing a man in a long tattered robe with a long beard carrying a sign that said, “The end is near.”

And since it’s been 2,000 years and Jesus hasn’t returned yet, skeptics have mocked the idea of Christ’s return. This is what the apostle Peter wrote way back then, <sup>3</sup> *Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,*

<sup>4</sup> and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." (2 Pet. 3:3-4 NAU) And why do they say that? They love the pleasures of the flesh and they follow them rather than Christ. *following after their own lusts,*

I would guess that some of us here this morning have thought about the fact that it's been almost 2,000 years since the prophets began saying the end is near. But note this, and I'm not saying that you are one of the mockers Peter addressed in that verse.

<sup>8</sup> *But do not let this one fact escape your notice, **beloved**, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*

<sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. (2 Pet. 3:8-9 NAU)*

**It isn't our hour, but God's. It isn't our timetable God is going by, but His.** And why? <sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

Those who are in Christ need to be reminded every once in a while of how God uses our time to work out His purposes and His heart's desire to give the world every opportunity to repent and believe on His Son.

<sup>18</sup> *Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.*

This was the apostle John giving a **heads-up** to the church concerning the coming rebellion against God and the saints and the return of the Lord Jesus for His church and to execute judgment on this world.

So, second,  
**Lets talk definitions**

Most of what John was writing about the Antichrist wasn't new to his readers, but this was. They had no idea that in their lifetime there were many antichrists, people who rejected the One who had redeemed them from their sins and given them eternal life. And it may be new to some of you. Not only is the day coming when "the" Antichrist will be revealed, but even as we gather here this morning the world is filled with people who are of the spirit of antichrist. So, it seems appropriate for me to stop here and remind you what characterizes people who are of the spirit of the antichrist. And I'll let the Bible do that.

<sup>22</sup> *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.*

<sup>23</sup> *Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also. (1 Jn. 2:22-23 NAU)*

And this, **1 John 4:1** *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.*

<sup>2</sup> *By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;*

<sup>3</sup> *and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. (1 Jn. 4:1-3 NAU)*

Who denies the Son? Do we know people who deny the Son of God as He is presented in the Bible? Yes, we do. Any religion or cult that preaches another Jesus and another gospel is of the spirit of the antichrist. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints denies the Biblical Christ by teaching that there are many gods and many christs in the universe and that Jesus and Satan are brothers. The Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses denies the Biblical Son of God by denying His deity and teaching that Jesus and Michael the Archangel are one and the same. The Roman Catholic Church denies the Biblical Son of God by preaching a false Jesus and a false gospel that says Jesus' death on the cross wasn't sufficient to pay for our sins, you must add to your faith in Jesus your works if you want to have any hope of making it to heaven.

And if you die and weren't good enough to get into heaven, you will go to the fictional place called Purgatory where you will be punished until you have somehow purged yourself of your sins which will never happen. **And Islam denies all of it.** Jesus is not the Son of God, He did not die on the cross, He was a lesser prophet than their prophet Muhammad and that when Jesus does return, it will be beside Muhammad and Jesus will be preaching Islam.

The goal of Islam is basically two-fold, to annihilate the Jews and Christians and, second, to destroy the truth of the incarnation of God the Son. \*Read from the book "Islam," p.147.

**Now, lets talk numbers, and I close with this,**

The world's population right now is near the 8 billion mark, sitting at 7.8 billion. And of that 7.8 billion people we will discover after a little research, the following numbers of religious groups that we can definitely describe as antichrist.

We have a total of **8,683,117 JW's; 16,565,036 Mormons; 1.2 billion Roman Catholics; 1.8 billion Muslims; 500 million Hindus; 488 million Buddhists; 15 million Jews.** For a total of 4,027,948,153 known antichrist on planet Earth at this time. That's more than half the world's population. And that isn't counting the average man on the street who doesn't believe that Jesus is the Son of God. It doesn't count the liberal, unbelieving members of the visible church who deny the essential truths of the Bible. It doesn't count our modern day false apostles and false prophets who themselves have millions of followers who have been deceived into believing their lies.

But here is the good news for you, beloved of God, that I leave you with each week.

<sup>13</sup> *But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (2 Thess. 2:13 NAU)*

<sup>20</sup> *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. (1 Jn. 2:20 NAU)*

