

### **1<sup>st</sup> John 3b-4a: In Christ, In Truth**

**“and this is the spirit of the antichrist.”**

So, the denial that Jesus came in the flesh, so that He could die for our sins and be the only Way to the Father is motivated by the spirit of the antichrist. This results in the characteristic attitude of the world to deny Jesus even when there is clear evidence. This wind of doctrine, this ideology resulting in false teachings to deceive the sheep was there in John’s time, and pervades our world today. When John says “that you heard is coming, and now already is in the world.” it reinforces what he said in 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:18 **it is the last hour** John is noting that there has been a change in the church from the true doctrine, the Word of God being taught, to having a bunch of teachers going out and teaching things contrary to the Word of God. It is an urgent situation, and John wants to make sure that his congregation knows it.

**and just as you heard that antichrist is coming,** But, John doesn’t want us to be blind to the fact that even from the beginning of church history, the lawless, confusion-sowing, chaos-producing spirit of Antichrist has been known to be in the world, and that we shouldn’t be surprised that there is false teaching. The matter-of-fact way that the Antichrist is mentioned over and over again in the New Testament suggests that it was common for the Apostles to mention this man of lawlessness in their teaching to the church.

**“even now many antichrists have come.”** John says, “even now many antichrists have come.” These many antichrists, whom John already sees in the world in his day, are the false teachers. He’s going to confront some of their specific teachings in 1 John 2:22 **22 Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.** And again in **2 John 7 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.** He’s going to identify the spirit behind their teachings in 1 Joh 4:2-3 saying **2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now it is already in the world.** So, we see that this spirit of lawlessness, the “do anything you want, it’s o.k., God will still accept you” is contrary to the gospel. A continual practice of sin is never part of the “abiding” experience in Christ. This heresy is a denial of the power and mission of Jesus, who came in the flesh to pay for our sins, so that we wouldn’t have to be a slave to them. The failure to deny fleshly appetites ends up in embracing sensuality, and then ultimately in a denial of the power of Jesus’ death on the cross. It’s not the road that you want to be on! Run back to Jesus, and satisfy your thirst at the river of Living Water instead! They serve as forerunners of the ultimate and final Antichrist. And their teaching of sensuality and fulfilling the fleshly appetites is a denial of who Jesus is as Christ, as Messiah, as Son of God and Son of Man, and specifically the power of His saving work on the cross. This is what identifies false teachers with the future false Christ, the antichrist.

#### **4 You are from God, little children,**

In both 1 John 1:1 and John 1:1 he begins his writings establishing that the origin of Jesus being is from the beginning, and being the Word of God, the Word of Life. They both speak of His origin from God and as God. Remember that it is God that allows us to be called His Children, John points us to our relationship with God the Father as our source, the original cause that brought about salvation. And John is pointing out the lavish love that God has poured out on us by giving His only son as the WAY, the MEANS by which we are saved—Jesus. His blood was poured out for us. The love that God has lavished on us is His Son Jesus. That’s the relationship that allows us to overcome. He provides The Way for us to be called “children of God” (tekna theou). God’s love transforms sinners who exercise saving faith into His children, through the Divine Ministry of His son Jesus—and we are transformed into HIS image, and bear, more and more, a family resemblance to God’s family. And it is our walk with Jesus that allows us to overcome, as He overcame the world. We have our identity in Christ, and therefore in God! That is why we won’t fall prey to this false teaching. As Col 3:1-3 tells us **Therefore, if you have been**

**raised with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** Our real life, who we really are is already hidden in Christ, where no evil influence can get to it! Therefore we need to live this way, and seek God and His Will in our lives. And we are not left alone to do this.

**Access to God's Power to do His Will** As members of God's family, we have special access to Him. We can approach God's throne with the intimacy of a child approaching their father, but also with the respect that is due from a subject approaching their king with a petition. We see this modeled by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane in Mark 14:35-36 **35 And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began praying that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will."** Jesus was suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, sweating great drops of blood, and He knows that this suffering will only increase over the next day. His heartfelt cry to the father is filled with an expression of His intimate relationship with the Father as He cries out to Him in prayer. But it is also an expression of submission to God's authority "Yet not what I will but what You will", and this is how we should approach God, even in a trial. If Jesus could remain strong in carrying the sins of the world and dying on the cross for us, and still call God Abba, in intimate, loving relationship, then so can we when we're in a trial. Because of our relationship with Jesus, we have access to the Father. In Gal 4:4-7 **4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons and daughters. 6 Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba! Father!"**

We are no longer under the law, a slave to sin, and marked for death. Because of Jesus, we don't have to be afraid of these things any longer. **Romans 8:15 "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' "** **7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.** Notice what motivates this prayer: It's the "Spirit of sonship" which stands in opposition to "the spirit of bondage to fear,". Paul emphasizes that it is through the Spirit, and specifically that part of the spirit's ministry that gives closeness to our relationship with God, that we cry out from an obedient, submissive heart to God. It is our relationship through God In Christ that allows us to come to God as an obedient child.

### **Empowered by the Holy Spirit**

And as God's adopted Children, our anointing comes from God, but remains identified with God. The source of this anointing, the Holy Spirit, is from God as the Spirit's source, and was sent out from Him to us, but the Holy Spirit is never separate from God, even when He is dwelling inside us. That's why He is a lifeline between God and us, working in our heart to conform us to the image of Christ, and at the other end of the line, also in communion with God. The anointing remains identified with God. All members of the Trinity are involved in our overcoming, and all of this is made possible by the salvation, justification, and propitiation, and redemption purchased by Jesus for us at the cross.