

# THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God*

**IN CHRIST JESUS.**

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

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## ***THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST***

**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. (1 John 2.18 NASB)**

**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. (1 John 2.22 NASB)**

**By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 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 John 4.2-3 NASB)**

**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. (2 John 1.7 NASB)**

John is the only writer of Scripture that used the word *antichrist*, as found five times in the above verses.

Today, many people are looking for a man to arrive on the stage of world power that will be the antichrist. Lately, some have been so bold as to announce a certain candidate for US President as the antichrist. In our locality, a community leader found himself in the news for an email he sent that contained a reference to the antichrist.

Let me be clear right from the start that this issue is not about making a claim that any man on the world scene today is the antichrist. In fact, the point that I want to stress is that we are living in a day in which there is a spirit of antichrist, which was the primary emphasis of John in his epistles. The fact of the matter is that he referred to antichrist in the singular and in the plural, in other words, both individually and collectively. As he wrote, many antichrists have appeared, that is, many deceivers have gone out into the world. John defined the last hour in terms of many antichrists going forth, which occurred in his day and has continued to our day. As he wrote: The spirit of antichrist is coming, and now it is already in the world. Thus, the last hour extends from Calvary to our day, which will not end until Christ Jesus Himself comes to take the scepter of the kingdom of this world.

We do not have to wonder what the spirit of antichrist stands for because John explains it to us. The spirit of antichrist denies the Father and the Son, and denies that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, or the Anointed One of God, which makes Him the Son of God, a fact testified to by John at least twelve times in his first epistle.

To add clarity to what John meant, we need to understand what was transpiring in his day. Judahites, that is, the Jews, claimed that they worshipped the Father of the Old Testament. However, Jesus proclaimed that He and the Father are one, and the only way to the Father is through Him. Besides, Jesus is the incarnation and the exact image of the God of the Old Testament. Consequently, those who deny the Son also deny the Father, and are antichrist. Simply, John was dealing with Judahites that said they were true worshippers of God, and yet they were not because they were denying or rejecting the Son of God. We must be clear that many Judahites in John's day rejected Jesus as the

true King. The leaders of the Jews, in essence, had usurped the throne of Christ and were ruling over the people in the place of Christ while declaring that they worshipped the Father. John refuted such a thing and called it *antichrist*. Let us not forget that the Father sent the Son to this earth to rule. He was rejected as the ruler of this world, but, thank God, He is coming again and nothing will stop Him from ruling over the nations in the next eon. The Judahites denied that the Son of God had come to them and denied that this same Jesus will come again as God's King.

In the Greek, the word *antichrist* is made up of two words, *anti*, which means "in the place of" or "instead of," and *christos*, which means "anointed." In other words, whoever or whatever takes the place of Christ is antichrist. The Judahites and Judaism of John's day met the criteria set forth by John. In fact, some had been with John and his people but left them because they lacked the faith that comes by hearing. They were Jews outwardly but not inwardly, for their hearts were not circumcised by the spirit of God (Romans 2.29). As John wrote: **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** (1 John 2.19 NASB).

The question is whether there is a spirit of antichrist in our day. The answer is yes, and I see it on two levels.

*First*, the spirit of antichrist has taken root in some (perhaps, many) Christians that believe that the so-called Jew of our day does not need Christ, the Son of God, for salvation because they are chosen and covenanted to God through what we know as the old covenant that the writer to the Hebrews has declared has been made obsolete and is ready to disappear (Hebrews 8.13), a covenant that the Jews have broken. Even Paul, by referring to the two Jerusalems, the one on earth and the one in heaven, declared that the earthly one, representative of Judaism and the old covenant, must be cast out, for the heavenly one, representative of Christianity and the new covenant *in* Christ, is the way to freedom (Galatians 4.21-5.1). Unfortunately, there are a host of Christians today that are reverting to Judaism as if Christianity must be wed to Judaism. This is the spirit of antichrist. Of course, we see the same spirit at work through those who see the Zionist state of Israel as the true Israel when it is actually a usurper of the name and birthright of the true Israel, the conquerors of Christ. Obviously, there is much more to this matter than I am able to squeeze into this space, but suffice it to say that the spirit of antichrist is among some who call themselves Christians.

*Second*, I also see the spirit of antichrist in a much broader sense. To me, anything or anyone that takes the place of Christ is antichrist. If a government, a world leader, a spiritual leader, or even an *ism*, which is a theory or system, takes the place of Christ as the sovereign ruler of this world, then it is antichrist. Mystery Babylon is antichrist, for it has taken the place of God's King in ruling over the nations. Most of the nations are antichrist, for they refuse to acknowledge God's King, and men have placed themselves on a throne for their own privilege and power. The financial/banking system that comes out of Babylon is antichrist, for it rules as king over the economies of the world and has made the inhabitants of the world slaves to its greed, lust, and sensuality. Let us wake up! People worship this financial/banking system as they bow to it each and every day. Just consider how obsessed people can be and have become with every move of the global stock markets. It is idolatry. Antichrist is idolatry. When Christ is replaced or pushed to the side or ignored, people begin to worship other things; it becomes idolatry.

To my fellow Americans and the world, do not be misled; the spirit of antichrist has supercharged the current race for the White House. It is not about any one man; but rather, it is about a spirit that seeks to replace Christ with a misleading hope of change.

**Christ is our hope.** Actually, **He is our expectation**, for hope is often merely wishful thinking. *Expectation* means we have absolute assurance it is true. He is God's King of the nations! Let us not lose sight of this fact, and let us not look to any one man as if he were the anointed one to lead the world into glory. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can do that, and He will, to the glory of God.

Let us reject the spirit of antichrist in all its forms. The kingdom of our Lord is coming!