

# 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)

#04-1085

***Antichrist***

August 7, 2010

Without doubt, many Christians have been taught that a person called the Antichrist will one day emerge on the global scene and rule the world. Consequently, many are looking for a man to rise to power. Whether a single man will literally rise up to fulfill this expectation remains to be seen. I realize much of this doctrine is based on verses out of Daniel, 2 Thessalonians, and Revelation; however, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> John are the only places in the entire Bible that the term *antichrist* is mentioned. Given this fact, if we want to know what *antichrist* means, we need to start with John.

But before doing so, in the Greek, the term *antichrist* is composed of the words *anti* and *christos*. The word *anti* means “instead of or because of.” In Matthew 2:22, we are told that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the place of [anti] his father Herod who had died. However, *anti* can also be used in the sense that one *usurps* the place of another. *Usurp* means “to take or assume or hold in possession by force or without right; said of seizures of power, position, rights, functions, etc.” It is in the context of usurpation that we must understand John’s use of the term *antichrist*, for he applied it to the Jews that had usurped the throne of Jesus Christ, the King of Judah. John does not state so directly, but the Jewish leaders that usurped Christ’s throne were the bad figs of the cursed fig tree of Judah.

Now, John refers to antichrist in the singular four times (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7) and antichrist in the plural one time (1 John 2:18). It could be argued that John’s reference to an antichrist does not necessarily refer to one unique individual because he used the term in a broad sense to define anyone that fits the bill, especially the many antichrists (i.e., deceivers and liars) of the last hour.

Eight times in his first epistle, John stressed the relationship between the Father and His Son: **Indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ** (1 John 1:3). No doubt, he did this because there were many *apparent* Jews in his day that claimed the God of the Old Testament as their Father but denied Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God. They were the antichrist.

**(18) 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. (19) 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. (20) But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. (21) 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. (22) 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. (23) Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.** (1 John 2:18-23 NASB)

John’s definition of *antichrist* is one who denies the Father and the Son. It all starts with the Son. If one denies that Jesus is the Christ, then he is denying the Son and, in turn, denying the Father as well, even if he claims the Father to be his God. The only way one can have the Father is to confess the Son, that is, confess that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. Consequently, anyone who claims to worship the God of Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David, and rejects the Son of God, Jesus the Christ, is antichrist. To add to this, Jesus Himself said: **“No one can come to the Father but through Me”** (John 14:6).

However, behind one who is called *antichrist* is *the spirit of antichrist*, and John warned that we must test the spirits to discern whether they are from God or not.

**(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. (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, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.** (1 John 4:1-3 NASB)

The spirit of antichrist does not and will not confess that Jesus the Christ came to earth in the flesh. In other words, this antichrist spirit denies that Jesus was the incarnation of God, the Son called **Immanuel, which translated means “God with us”** (Matthew 1:23). Or putting it another way, using Paul’s words, this spirit denies that He was and still is **His beloved Son ... the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation** (Colossians 1:13, 15). The spirit of antichrist is applied to every spirit that makes this denial, so that, in this case, the spirit of antichrist does not refer to the spirit of one individual called *antichrist* but is used in a collective sense. This is further confirmed by John in his second epistle in which he assigned this spirit to individuals that he called *deceivers*.

**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)

Consequently, every person that denies Christ came in the flesh (i.e., God with us) is the antichrist. Although John refers to antichrist in the singular, it is clear that he is using it to define the many deceivers. Deceivers are antichrists.

But who were and still are these deceivers? They are the *apparent* Jews that continue to hold to Judaism, a religion of man and his traditions that rejects Jesus Christ. **Judaism is the synagogue of Satan.** They claim the God of Abraham as their Father but deny the Son, even knowingly rejecting Him (Matthew 21:38-39). By Jesus’ own words, they are liars.

**(2:9) ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.’ ... (3:9) ‘Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you.’** (Revelation 2:9; 3:9 NASB)

In God’s eyes, the Jews who say they belong to Him and yet reject His Son are not Jews; they lie. They are deceivers, which is what a liar does. According to Jesus, the truth is not in them. When Jesus accused the Jews of doing the deeds of their father, they declared that they had one Father: God. But Jesus answered.

**(42) “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. (43) Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. (44) You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.** (John 8:42-44 NASB)

By God’s definition, to be a true Jew, one must believe on His Son and have an inward circumcision of the heart, which is explained by Paul in Romans 2:29: **But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.**

Those who say they are Jews, but are not ones inwardly, lie. They are apparent Jews. In the ages to come, their part will be in the lake of fire, not in New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:8, 27; 22:15).

Children, it is the last hour; many antichrists have come and many are here in our day. We don’t need to look for one antichrist to come; we need to be alert to the many antichrists and the spirit of antichrist that has permeated the world, especially the Christian world that has fallen into Christian Zionism and reversionism. Any Christian attempting to bring Christianity into Judaism has the spirit of antichrist upon them, and any Christian who turns from Christianity to Judaism is antichrist. Let us reject anything or anyone that usurps the throne of Christ.