

**THAT FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH WHICH THE LYING ANTICHRISTS  
DENY  
1Jno.2:22,23  
Ed Dye**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. In our present text John, with greater specificity, brings out more fully the true nature and condemning consequences of the error of the antichrists, and sets it over against the nature and consequences of the truth known by and held tenaciously by the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. John has just spoken of lies in v.21. He passes now to and identifies the specific liar he has in mind in vv.22,23.
  - a. This one is the chief liar, the consummate liar; he is the one who denies the fundamental fact of Christianity, the fact on which everything else in the N.T. system of faith depends.
  - b. He is, as it were, the “boss liar...”
  - c. Thus the “lie” mentioned in v.21 is here identified with the “liar”; the antichrist.
3. That fundamental fact of Christianity, or the first and supreme truth of the Faith, which the lying antichrists deny, is stated, repeated and explained in our text.
4. These two verses reveal how much is involved in, and how serious are the consequences of, the error of the antichrists.

**II. DISCUSSION**

**A. WHAT IS THIS FUNDAMENTAL FACT OF CHRISTIANITY, OR THIS FIRST AND SUPREME TRUTH OF THE FAITH, DENIED BY THE LYING ANTICHRISTS? “That Jesus is the Christ”, “the Son of God,” vv.22,23. “That Jesus is come in the flesh,” 1Jno.3: 2Jno.7.**

1. That Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Messiah, the One sent from God, the Father, the Son of God, is the first apprehension, act of conceiving, or perception, of Jesus that men must gain, accept of come to realize.
  - a. This conception of him begins the differentiation of Jesus from other men, a fact the antichrists denied.

- b. There were other men named Jesus (Joshua), but this man stood out and stands out as distinct from all of them.
  - c. He appeared before the Jewish people during his earthly ministry, and the first thing they were asked to do was to recognize him as their long-awaited Messiah.
  - d. When challenged as to his true identity, Peter confessed, with Jesus' blessings, what all of them should have believed, Mt.16:13-18; Cf. Ac.2:36-38; 8:35-38; Rom.10:9,10.
2. When carefully observing all his works, and listening to all his words, while he was in the flesh here on the earth, one is increasingly impressed that what he is embodying in a human life is divine Sonship.
  3. By his very life here on earth, attested by the Father's own words from heaven, and the miracles which God did by him by means of the Holy Spirit, and recorded in holy writ by the Spirit-guided apostles, whose word was confirmed by miraculous signs, wonders and mighty deeds, the fact of his Messiahship and or Divine Sonship is established beyond reasonable doubt. Cf. Mt.3:16,17; Ac.2:22; 10:38; Mt.12:28; Lk.11:20; 4:18,19; Ac.1:2; Mk.16:19,20; 2Cor.12:12; Heb.2:1-4.
  4. The word "Son," used in reference to Jesus of Nazareth being the "Son of God," has reference to his Divine Sonship, to the fact that he is "the Only Begotten Son of God, and not a "son of God," by reason of the new birth, 1Jno.1:18; Cf. Gal.3:26,27.
  5. The name "Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah," and therefore the term "antichrist" is strictly applicable to the one who opposes or, in the case of 1Jno., denies the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, and all that is involved.

**B. WHAT THEN DOES THE DENIAL OF THE LYING ANTICHRISTS INVOLVE?**

1. Many errors are not only serious in themselves (such as this error of the antichrists), but are even more serious on account of other errors they drag along with them (such as this error of the antichrists does). Cf. 1Cor.15:12-18.
2. According to the denial of the lying antichrists"
  - a. The truth that Jesus is the Christ or that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, or that Jesus is the Son of God, or that Jesus is both God and man, is branded as a lie, an absolute lie!
  - b. Jesus and Christ were two different persons or brings. They contended:

- (1) That Christ merely appeared to have flesh, but in reality did not.
    - (2) That the one designated Jesus was without divine origin.
    - (3) That the Divine Christ descended upon the man Jesus at his baptism, and left him before his Passion, or before his crucifixion.
  - c. Therefore, the effect of this Gnostic heresy was:
    - (1) In the case of Christ, to deny his humanity.
    - (2) In the case of Jesus, the deny his Deity.
3. It involves a denial of both the Father and the Son: “He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father,” vv.22b,23a.
  - a. The denial of the truth concerning Jesus in v.22a involves the denial of both the Father and the Son as affirmed in v.22b.
    - (1) As Wescott aptly puts it, “He hath not the son, whom he rejects, nor yet the Father, whom he professes to regard.”
  - b. When you consider that the term Father necessarily implies a son, and vice versa (conversely, the order or relation being reversed), this is an obvious conclusion.
    - (1) For he who denies the truth that Jesus is the Christ or that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh and rejects or disowns Jesus of Nazareth as begin that one; he in and by that same unbelief and act of unbelief rejects the Father also.
    - (2) Inasmuch as it is not possible to know the Father but by the Son, since the Son is the one who hath declared him (Jno.1:18; 147), the denial and rejection of the Son must of necessity extend to the Father also.
    - (3) You can’t have one without the other! Cf. 2Jno.9,10.
    - (4) God, the Father, without Jesus Christ, the Son, is simply not! Such a being is utterly without existence!
  - c. When one denies the Son, he denies the Incarnation.
    - (1) Denying the Incarnation, he denies the revelation of God, and a Mediator between God and man.
    - (2) He denies, consequently, any spiritual link between man and God!
    - (3) The Incarnate Christ united man to God. The antichrists would disown or bread the tie, so that man is cut off from God, thus bringing about the following terrible result: “He that denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father,” v.23a.

- (4) Thus everything distinctive of the faith of Christ, the N.T. system of faith, the one faith, goes in a moment, when once the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ is denied.
  - (5) This is the antichrist of 1Jno. **He would take away the ladder between earth and heaven!** He leaves man with no Savior and therefore doomed to a devil's hell!
4. Therefore, according to the denial of the lying antichrist:
- a. There is no Fatherhood and Sonship in the Divine Nature, or no Father and Son in the Godhead.
  - b. God is not the Father as Jesus Christ of Nazareth represented him.
  - c. We have no personal revelation of God, the Father, nor any personal message of love from the eternal throne of heaven.
  - d. We have no Redeemer and no redemption.
  - e. We have no Savior and no salvation.
  - f. We have no head of humanity with living and regenerative power to quicken our soul dead in sin.
  - g. Jesus is not now the risen Savior, the reigning King on David's throne, at the right hand of God in heaven, the glorified man in heaven as the head of the church, with all authority in heaven and in earth.

**C. BY CONTRAST, JOHN OFFERS AN ENCOURAGING AFFIRMATION: "He that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also," v.23b.**

- 1. Having shown us in vv.22,23a of how much the lie of the antichrists would deprive us, now in v.23b, he declares something of how rich we are when that lie is rejected, and the truth of the gospel of Christ abides in us.
- 2. Acknowledging the Son, of course, must include:
  - a. Confessing Jesus as the Christ the Son of the Living God, which involves much more than merely saying "Lord, Lord," Mt.7:21-27.
  - b. Abiding in the confession of the Son in all his glory and grace.
  - c. Submission to him in all he requires of us as his disciples with our whole heart and soul.
  - d. Owning him as the Revealer of the Father.
  - e. Honoring him as both "Lord and Christ," Ac.2:36.
  - f. Following him as Leader.

- g. Growing up in him as head.
  - h. Imitating him as our example.
3. V.23 confirms the preceding statement of v.22, and is an emphatic expansion of it, negatively and positively.
  4. But more is taught here than the mere essential unity between the Father and the Son.
    - a. It is true that to deny the One is to deny the Other; but, more than this, to deny the Son is to deprive oneself of relationship to, and companionship with the Father.
    - b. Professed acknowledgment is one thing; actual possession is another. Apart from the latter mere profession is meaningless and does not receive Divine recognition.
    - c. Again, confession of Jesus as the Christ and all that is involved therein, carries with it the confession of the Father, and also involves Divine relationship and communion with the Father.
    - d. Thus it involves more than holding an article of faith or knowing the will of the Father.
    - e. Confession of Christ goes with possession of Christ, and those who receive him become children of God. Cf. Jno.1:10-13; Gal.3:26,27.
  5. To acknowledge the Fatherhood of God and deny the Deity and Sonship of Christ is utterly impossible. For one cannot truly and sincerely acknowledge the Son without also acknowledging the Father.
  6. In what sense do those who acknowledge the Son have the Father?
    - a. In the Person of Christ as the Incarnate Son they have the exact image of the Father, so that they see him through the Son. Cf. Jno.1:18; 14:9; Heb.1:1-3.
    - b. Through the atoning work of Christ they have the self-sacrificing love of the Father, Jno.3:16,17; Rom.5:8; 1Jno.4:10.
    - c. Through the mediation of Christ they have access to the Father, Rom.8:32-34; Eph.2:18; 1Tim.2:5; Rom.5:2.
    - d. Through the intercession of Christ they have constant communion with the Father; not merely occasional access as to a king, but a filial fellowship with the Father, 1Jno.1:3, et al.
    - e. Through Christ as the channel of communication between earth and heaven they receive the ultimate wealth of the Father, 1Cor.3:21-23; Rom.8:28-39.
    - f. Through Christ we have God as our Father in God's spiritual family, with Jesus as our brother, with the privilege of approaching God in prayer: thus we have the eyes of the Lord

over us and his ears open to our prayers, Heb.2:11,12; 1Jno.5:14,15; 1Pet.3:1.

**D. FOR EMPHASIS, CONSIDER THE EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE LYING ANTICHRISTS MADE THEIR DENIAL OF CHRIST. They made it:**

1. In spite of the clearest and widest variety of miraculously confirmed testimony to the facts and doctrines denied.
2. In spite of the tenderest and costliest seal of its truth: The blood of Jesus Christ. “The blood of the everlasting covenant.”
  - a. He gave his life voluntarily, rather than retract his claim to being the Son of God.
  - b. He didn’t die the death of a martyr; he gave up his life as a sin-offering; the just for the unjust.
3. In spite of the most powerful confirmation of all – his resurrection from the dead – having shown himself alive after his passion to many creditable witnesses by many infallible proofs.
4. In spite of the fact that the apostle John, with miraculous power to confirm the truth of his message, was still living.
5. In spite of the fact that at that time certain disciples in the churches had spiritual gifts, including the gift of discerning of spirits, by which to try the spirits, and miraculously expose the false teachers and false prophets.

**III. CONCLUSION**

1. Careful lest we paint the term “antichrist” with too broad a brush, forgetting the very precise use and limited connotation of the term as used in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> John. Cf. 2Pet.2:1; Jude 4.
  - a. Though the term “anti” has two possible meanings (a) “over against” and (b) “opposed to” or “denies”
    - (1) If the former is meant, with reference to Christ, it denotes “one who put himself in the place of Christ.”
    - (2) If the latter is meant, with reference to Christ, it denotes “one who stands in opposition to” or “denies Christ.”
  - b. But the word “antichrist” or its equivalent is peculiar to and appears only in the writings of John, Peter and Jude: 1Jno.2:18; 2:22; 4:3; 2Jno.7; 2Pet.2:1; Jude 4:

- (1) Where it always refers to one who “stands in opposition to Christ” or “denies that Jesus is the Christ.”
    - (2) Where it never refers to one who “puts himself in place of Christ,” such as the “false Christs” of Mt.24:24-26, who do not deny the existence of Christ, but who trading upon the expectation of his appearance, affirms that he is the Christ.
    - (3) Nor does the “man of sin; the son of perdition,” of whom Paul speaks in 2Th.2, deny “that Jesus is the Christ,” or “that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.”
  - c. By comparison note the characteristics of the antichrist of whom John writes; he is a liar and a deceiver because:
    - (1) He denies that Jesus is the Christ.
    - (2) He denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.
    - (3) He denies that Jesus is the Son of God.
    - (4) He denies that the Word of Life, that eternal life, was manifested in the flesh.
2. On the basis of all this we surely can understand the vehemence, the animated fervor, with which John denounces the antichrists.
  3. Such strong denunciation is similar to that:
    - a. Of John and Jesus with reference the unbelieving Jews of their day willfully rejecting Jesus, Mt.3:7-9; 23:13-38.
    - b. Of Paul in the case of Elymas the sorcerer of Ac.13:6-12.
    - c. Of Paul in the case of the “man of sin” in 2Th.2:3-8.
    - d. Of Peter, 2Pet.2:1-3.
  4. Such teaching primarily written to refute the ancient Gnosticism of that day is equally applicable in our day to:
    - a. Modern Rationalism which claims belief in God but rejects Jesus Christ as God’s Son and the N.T. Scriptures as a revelation from him.
    - b. The unbelieving Jews who deny that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ the Son of God, and who are still looking for the Messiah to come from God.
    - c. To others of like stripe.
  5. But since the Incarnation of Christ, with all its infallible, positive proofs, no one can truthfully claim there is no creditable evidence supporting the acceptance of deity on the ground that such is unknowable. For the Father has

revealed himself to man through the Son, Jesus Christ. Cf. Isa.7:14; 53:1-12; Mt.1:18-23; Jno.1:1-3,14,18; 14:7-9.

6. To believe, to fully accept, this first and supreme truth, this fundamental fact of Christianity, in all it means, involves and includes is to gain and be blessed with that truth of what:
  - a. The apostle Paul said: “worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...,” 1Tim.1:15.
  - b. John said: Jno.3:36; 1Jno.4:9,10,14.
  - c. John recorded Jesus saying: Jno.3:16-18.
  
7. I insist on the following three points with reference to our subject matter:
  - a. That no man has a right to deny, any more than affirm, save on adequate grounds.
  - b. That violent prejudice against the admission of the supernatural is but a faulty prepossession, which hinders the reception of evidence.
  - c. That it is never right to rob men of an inspiring power for virtue, unless the denier has something better to offer or to put in its place.









