



## **UnAuthentic**

### **Key idea:**

Believers must be prepared to resist unauthentic teachings that distort the Person and work of Jesus Christ and thus create a false Gospel.

### **Key text:**

2 John 7-11

Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. <sup>8</sup> Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. <sup>9</sup> Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. <sup>10</sup> If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. <sup>11</sup> Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

### **Key points:**

1. John warned that there were many deceivers who teach serious errors that distorted the Person and work of Jesus Christ.
2. John is the only biblical writer to use the term antichrist. He uses it in 1 John 2:18,22; 1 John 4:1-3; and 2 John 7. His emphasis in these passages teach us:
  - a. The antichrist is a deceiver and false prophet teaching an unauthentic message.
  - b. The primary emphasis is not a single individual wielding oppressive political power trying to coerce believers, but rather a group of people who seduce by a deceitful, false message.
  - c. The central issue is the Person and work of Jesus Christ, the God-Man truly come in the flesh.
3. The particular group of deceivers John was dealing with was an early form of the heresy known as Gnosticism. This group taught that physical matter was inherently evil. This belief affected every part of their understanding of the faith, as can be seen from the table below.

Topic	Antichrist Gnosticism	Orthodox Christianity
Creation	Matter/creation is evil	Matter/creation is inherently good
Fall	Being created as flesh	Spiritual and physical disobedience
Jesus Christ	Truly God but only appeared to be human	Truly, fully God and truly, fully human - God took human flesh and our whole nature except sin
Redemption	Jesus taught secret knowledge. The Christ (Anointing Spirit) left Jesus on the cross; Jesus never died and lives spiritually	Jesus physically died to pay for our sin and was literally, physically resurrected to secure salvation
Justification	Acquiring secret knowledge (beyond apostles and God's written Word)	Faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus
Sanctification	Either mistreat the body (Colossians 2) or say bodily actions do not matter (1 Corinthians 6)	The Spirit is working to sanctify us in soul and body
Consummation/ Glorification	Living spiritually without a physical body	Living eternally in a resurrected body

4. Gnosticism continues to promote an alternative faith even today, distorting our understanding of humanity and salvation.

**Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. How much have I heard taught about the antichrist? When I hear 'the antichrist', what comes to my mind? How would I describe the antichrist? How does this compare with what John actually taught about the antichrist?

3. When I consider the table contrasting Gnosticism with orthodox Christianity, why are they so different in every area? Why does my view of creation affect my understanding of salvation? Of eschatology (the eternal state)?
4. What effects of Gnosticism can I see in popular understandings of Christianity? How has it affected my own thought regarding the Christian faith?
5. If I were to make a table like the one above for other belief systems or ideas in our current culture, what would it look like? How does a technological understanding of humanity and creation look like in these areas? How does a purely materialist evolutionary philosophy view these areas?
6. The Gnostic heresy led to a very different view of sanctification. Some Gnostics thought spirituality involved harsh treatment of the body (Colossians 2:19-22; 1 Timothy 4:1-6), while others thought bodily actions did not matter as long as the spirit was pure (1 Corinthians 6:12-20). Which of these is a bigger temptation in our modern culture? Why? How do I resist this temptation?
7. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

**For further Study:**

[Authentic Faith and the Antichrist](#) (June 7, 2015)

[Counterfeit Spirituality](#) (May 13, 2012)

[Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation series](#) (2007)

[Deciphering the DaVinci Code seminar](#) (the early Church's beliefs about the Deity and humanity of Christ)

**Preview of next week: Authentic Community (2 John 12-13)**