

Revelation 6:1-2
The Antichrist
Study 23

Before we move into our study this morning and before we start the recording,

- There are a couple things I'd like to revisit regarding last week's message
 - With my conversations this past week, I felt it necessary to follow up on a couple things
- First, let me correct something I said.
 - I had mentioned the Passion conferences in conjunction with the NAR heresy
 - I was teaching a bit ad hoc at the point in my message and in my head I was seeing "Jesus Culture" and what came out of my mouth was Passion
 - I knew something didn't line up when I said it and so I followed up with a concern I had with the Jesus Culture movement
 - I should have reversed a bit and corrected my mis-statement on the Passion Conference ministries
 - Bu it really wasn't until that afternoon that I realized fully what I did
 - So, to be clear, the Passion conferences have nothing to do with the NAR and I apologize that I did not immediately correct that last week

Also, in mentioning the heresy of the NAR, I had linked the Jesus Culture movement to them

- That is indeed an accurate statement and I wanted to briefly add some information
 - While most Christians only see JC the band,
 - The band actually came from a youth conference put on by Bethel Church in Redding CA – pastored by the dangerous teachings of Bill Johnson
 - The youth conference was called Jesus Culture and after putting on a few conferences they decided to record a CD
 - And the name of the conferences stuck to the band
- At it's core, Jesus Culture began and remains a movement

- As Kim Walker, singer for JC, calls it “it’s a movement all about raising up revivalists”
- It’s a movement sprung out of the teachings and ministry of Bethel Church, again, headed by Bill Johnson
 - Who firmly aligns himself with the WoF and NAR (AKA – the Third Wave movement)
 - In fact Bill Johnson is referred to by one of the founders of the NAR (C. Peter Wagner) as an “apostle” of NAR
 - And, incidentally, Bill teaches that Jesus had to be born again.
 - That Jesus had to be born again because Jesus became sin
- In any event, my point is not to do a teaching on discernment this morning
 - But to clear up my statements on the Passion conferences and on Jesus Culture from last week
 - If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me or email me on the subject. I’m happy to send you information if you’d like (start recording)

Ok, to this morning’s message.....

- Last week we briefly looked at the Tribulation period and at the first seal in chapter 6 of Revelation
 - In doing so, we identified the rider of the white horse that the first broken seal revealed as the Antichrist
 - It became obvious to me from the myriad of conversations I had following the service
 - That a teaching on the Antichrist would be good for us
- And so while I intended to continue in chapter 6 this morning
 - In praying this week, I felt it necessary to visit the topic of the Antichrist
 - And hopefully gain a proper and biblical view

There’s a lot we want to cover, but let me begin with something very important as we start our study here

- There is so much fascination with the person of Antichrist.
 - Just a quick Google search on the name “Antichrist” will tell you that people spend way too much time on this subject
 - And there are more theories and speculations on the Antichrist than really should be
 - From both the world and Christians alike

- So let me start by giving proper perspective
- If you are not a Christian this morning – meaning that you have not repented of your sins, and confessed and received Jesus as Lord
 - Then watching for the antichrist is to be expected – even if you don't realize that is who you're watching for
 - It's to be expected for you to be looking for something or someone with the answers to this world's problem
 - Something to give you hope
 - Someone to give this world answers to the hunger issues, the homeless issues, the war issues, the disease issues, and so on....

However, if you are a believer this morning – if you are a Christian

- Then the coming world leader that we ought to be preoccupied with and talking about
 - Is none other than Jesus Christ
 - He should be our preoccupation in all things
- This morning we will be saying a few things about **A** coming world leader – the antichrist
 - But we should not be giving him more attention than **THE** coming world leader
 - He who is King of kings and Lord of lords

I am amazed at how many Christians spend crazy amounts of time attempting to identify who the antichrist is.

- The reigning champ of candidates in America lately is President Barack Obama.
 - Before him it was Bush (both of them) and Clinton and so forth
 - Russia's Gorbachev was, and still is, a very popular candidate
 - The Pope and Catholic church are often talked about in these conversations
- Coming up quickly in the ranks of candidates is the Muslim Mahdi; also know to some as the Twelfth Imam
 - This is espoused by well respected Bible teachers such as John MacArthur
 - The Muslim Mahdi is Islam's savior
 - And as MacArthur says ""The Mahdi is the exact replica of the Antichrist.""

- Part of his reasoning is that "The nations that will be a coalition for the Antichrist--all eight of those are Muslim nations."
 - I listened to his recent teaching on this and his arguments are well presented
- But my point in all of this, and I believe Johnny Mac would agree by the way,
 - Is that we as Christians should be more preoccupied with THE coming world leader – Jesus the Christ
 - Than we should the false world leader – the antichrist
- As Tony Garland put it:
 - “the Scriptures teach the imminent pretribulational rapture of the church which, by design, is to cause us to watch for *Christ* (the bridegroom) rather than *Antichrist*. Scripture teaches that the Church will not be present to be distracted by watching for Antichrist. When the time is right, she will follow in the footsteps of Enoch—who is a type for those in Christ:
 - “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (Gen. 5:24).
 - By the time the flood came, Enoch had already been taken”

So if we are to be preoccupied with Christ, why then take a full Sunday to study it? Good question

- I’ll give you two reasons:
 - First, and most importantly, because God the Holy Spirit put the information in the Bible
 - We, therefore, should know what the Bible says
 - We should know what the Bible says on all things
- And secondly, so that we are equipped to share with unbelievers when the opportunity present themselves
 - For example, this week I was sitting in a hospital with many family members and friends of my mom who was having surgery
 - In the course of the conversation a question was posed to me as a pastor
 - as to what I thought of the Middle East conflict and where I stood on certain aspects.
- I had a great opportunity to share that peace will be sought after by the world

- And that a man would come with a peace treaty to put an end to the warring
 - But that the man would be a deceiver and so forth
 - We then had a brief opportunity to steer the conversation to Jesus – the Prince that brings ultimate peace.

So who is this antichrist depicted in scripture? What does the Bible have to say that we can learn?

- I want to answer this by asking and answering four questions.
 - 1) What does the Bible tell us about who is he and how he will be identified?
 - 2) What does the Bible say about his character?
 - 3) What does the Bible say about his reign?
 - And lastly, what does the Bible say about his fate?

Let's begin with the first question - What does the Bible tell us about who the antichrist is and how he will be identified?

- So let's start with something really basic -
 - The Antichrist is a man. Not a symbol; not a corporation; not a woman; not a particularly wicked era
 - Some even think the antichrist is a term used to describe evil in the battle between good and evil
- It's amazing how many have tried to force the concept of the antichrist
 - as being a conglomerate such as the Catholic church
 - Or as merely an allegorical symbol of evil
- But, if we take the Bible literally – as we should unless there is evidence to the contrary in the Bible itself
 - Then it's clear - There is no other conclusion that the Antichrist is a man
 - 2 Thes 2:3 calls him the “man of sin” or 2 Thes. 2:8 calls him the “man of sin”
 - Throughout scripture the Antichrist is referred to by the personal pronoun of “he” as well
- I know that is really a basic concept for most here, but it needs to be said
 - The Antichrist is a man who will come upon the world scene with all the answers to the world's problems
 - Politically, economically, spiritually

Interestingly, there is an ongoing debate as to the origin of the antichrist - whether he is Jewish or gentile

- This is done in hopes of helping identify who the antichrist is
 - Some argue that he must be Jewish because the Jews wouldn't accept him as their messiah unless he were Jewish
 - There's also the argument from Daniel 11 which says that "37 He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above *them* all. "
 - The argument says that phrase "god of his father" is a reference to the true God of the Jews
 - And there are many others as well
- Many hold that he will be gentile, not Jewish
 - Part of the thinking is that the Antichrist will be the final ruler of what Luke describes as the Time of the Gentiles
 - Luke 21:24 "And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"
 - It also thought that Daniel 9 describes the one cutting a covenant with Israel to be a representative from a revived Roman Empire
 - Since it was the Roman's who destroyed Jerusalem in 70AD
- Personally, I don't think the scripture is overly dogmatic.
 - Any assumed reference to the Antichrist as Jewish are all inferences and not direct statements of scripture
 - So we need to be careful in our interpretations

To me, I don't think his origin is of great importance

- I think there's a much more true indicator
 - Turn with me to Daniel chapter 9 and start in verse 24
- 24 "Seventy weeks [***literally seventy sevens***] are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.
 - What is this saying?
 - In a nutshell, this is a high level overview of the prophecy of the coming Messiah at the end of the tribulation.

- When Jesus comes back – at His 2nd coming – He will make an end of sin and bring everlasting righteousness
 - This is, of course, why we look for the coming Christ
 - Not the coming antichrist

Verse **25** “Know therefore and understand, *That* from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, *There shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

- From the time of the command to rebuild Jerusalem (which happened in 445BC by Artaxerxes in Neh. Chapter 2)
 - From that date until the time that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and presented Himself as Messiah to Israel
 - It was exactly 69 weeks – or 69 sevens
- Seven sevens, which is 49 years, until the city and its walls are rebuilt
 - The 69 sevens, (7 plus 62), were 483 years from the decree given by Artaxerxes, until Messiah the Prince appeared in Jerusalem
 - And that leaves a final 70th week - of the 70th stretch of seven years
 - to complete the prophecy
 - This remaining 7 year stretch is what we now see in Revelation as the 7-year tribulation period

Verse **26** “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

- After 62 sevens, the Messiah would be cut off. This is a prophecy of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
 - Jerusalem and her temple would be destroyed *again* by an overwhelming army (**with a flood**).
 - Which most Bible scholars and commentators agree that this was fulfilled in the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Verse **27** Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;

- The “he” here is a reference to the previous verse “and the people of the prince who is to come”
 - This is a reference to the Antichrist
 - But what I want us to take notice of is that this prince to come, this antichrist as John calls him
 - Is revealed by making a covenant with many for one week – or one 7
 - Meaning that the antichrist will be making a treaty; a peace agreement with many
- This “with many” is a specific reference to the nation and people of Israel
 - In fact, the Hebrew says “covenant with the many”

To remind everyone what we saw last week in Rev 6

- **2** “And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”
 - The antichrist sits on a white horse, symbolically showing his military power
 - And his goal is to go out conquering and to conquer
 - By means of a bow.
- Possibly a reference to a weapon without ammunition – a bow but now arrows
 - Or it’s possibly a reference to the first time “bow” was used in the scripture
 - That of the rainbow God presented as a sign of His covenant with the world to not flood the earth again

In any event, we know for certain that the antichrist will be revealed in the world with the signing of a peace treaty with the nation of Israel for a period of 7 years

- Of course the world won’t recognize the significance, but this is the definitive sign
 - And in the middle of the peace agreement – at the 3.5 year mark - he will break the treaty
 - We see this in the later portion of verse 27
 - “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even

until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”

- This mid-way point is also identified in Matthew 24:15
 - “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), **16** “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...” and so forth
 - Many believe that Rev 13:14 may be this abomination
 - As it describes the antichrist making some kind of image which all are forced to worship.
 - Turning the temple of the living God into a place of worship for the Antichrist is certainly an “abomination.”

So, to the first question posed: What does the Bible tell us about who is he and how he will be identified?

- The basic answer is that a man will come on the scene, with obvious political power and prowess
 - And he will have diplomatic brilliance -
- When the Beast, as Revelation 13 calls him
 - Finally appears on the world stage, he will have great words and great ideas
 - And present an irresistible solution to the troubles of his age.

Now, what does the Bible say about his character. How is he described throughout the pages of scripture?

- One way to see this is through the lens of his many names in the Bible that he is referred to as
 - We just mentioned one – he is known as the **beast**
 - Rev 11:7, when speaking of the 2 witnesses, the Bible says
 - “When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them”
- This name "the Beast" is such a contrast of the Antichrist from the true Christ as "the Lamb";
 - and it is a significant fact that by far the great majority of passages where the Lord Jesus is so designated are also found here in the Apocalypse.
 - The "Lamb" is the Savior of sinners; the "Beast" is the persecutor and slayer of the saints.

- The "Lamb" calls attention to the gentleness of Christ; the "Beast" tells of the ferocity of the Antichrist.
 - The "Lamb" reveals Christ as the "harmless" One (Heb. 7:26); the "Beast" manifests the Antichrist as the cruel and heartless one.
 - Interestingly, under the Law lambs were ceremonially clean and used in sacrifice, but beasts were unclean and unfit for sacrifices (*unknown*)

Turn with me to 2 Thes. 2

- Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, **2** not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. **3** Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the **man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4** who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."
 - This passage gives us two names for the antichrist –
 - The man of sin, who is also known as the son of perdition
- This double title is probably the most awful, the most important, and the most revealing title given to the Antichrist in all the Bible.
 - Because it is a diagnosis his personality and exposes his horrendous character.
 - It tells us he will be possessed of a twofold nature: he will be a man full of sin, and yet more than a man.
 - He will be Satan's puppet of the God-Man.
 - The world today is talking of and looking for the Super-man. This is exactly what the Antichrist will be. He will be the Serpent's masterpiece.

"That Man of Sin". What a frightful name!

- The sin of man will culminate in the Man of Sin.
 - The Christ of God was sinless; the Christ of Satan will not only be sinful, but the Man of Sin.
 - The title, "Man of Sin", also intimates that he will be the living and active embodiment of every form and character of evil.
 - In a way, it signifies that he will be sin itself

personified.

- There will be no lengths of wickedness to which he will not go, no forms of evil to which he will be a stranger, no depths of corruption that he will not bottom.

This other title, "The Son of Perdition".

- The word "perdition" means destruction.
 - This is why verse 4 further describes his nature saying
 - **4** "who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God".
 - This is the culmination of a destructive nature -
- As Guzik reminds us: "it's really the opposite of salvation"
 - To call him the **son of** perdition means his character is marked by this destruction
 - What a contrast to Jesus who is the One who brings order out of chaos,
 - Who brings life from death
 - And hope from hopelessness

Look down a verse 8 where we see another title of the antichrist that gives us an understanding to his character

- **8** "And then the **lawless one** will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming."
 - Here, Paul calls him out to be the "lawless one"
- Each of his names exhibits him as the antithesis of the true Christ.
 - The Lord Jesus was the Righteous One; the Man of Sin will be the Lawless One.
 - The Lord Jesus was "made under the law" (Gal. 4:4); the Antichrist will oppose all law, being a law unto himself.
 - When Jesus came into this world, He came saying, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." (Heb. 10:9);
 - But of the Antichrist, Daniel 11:36 says "And the king shall do according to *his* will"
- The Antichrist will set himself up in direct opposition to all authority, both Divine and human.
 - And there will be many, many who follow him

The last name I want to look at given to us in the Bible about this beast, this man of sin, this man of lawlessness

- Is found in 1 John chapter 2 – turn there
 - And it's the only time this term is used specifically of this man
 - Verse **18** "Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the[c] Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour"
- Interesting that this is the only time in scripture that the term Antichrist is used of this man
 - But the title is very telling and fitting
 - It is a title that describes his true intent, which is to be against Messiah.
 - All the other names essentially portray the various characteristics which he will use in his opposition to Messiah.

But what I want us to realize through these titles, is that the antichrist will be a master imitator

- A master deceiver
 - He will be an imitator of Christ
 - He will be the object of worship,
 - He will have worldwide dominion,
 - He will even sit on a throne in the temple and declare himself to be god).
- And he is the best the world has ever seen at deception because he is empowered and possessed by Satan himself
 - Rev 13: **2** Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. **The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.**
 - The beast, again, is the antichrist
 - And the dragon of Rev 13 is none other than Satan himself
 - He is given power, and a throne and great authority by Satan
 - 2 Thes. 2: **9** The coming of the *lawless one* is **according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10** and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

- This power and great authority given by Satan allows the antichrist to do all power, signs and wonders according to the working of Satan

The character of the antichrist is ruthless, cunning, evil, blasphemous, and beastly

- He will be the personification and embodiment of sin and lawlessness
 - And have the power of Satan because he will be indwelt by Satan directly
 - His reign, which we will look at in a moment, is supported by lies, wonders, signs, false miracles
- And when he comes on the scene,
 - People will follow him.
 - Some, willingly and others by compulsion
- But for certain we know this, that
 - “All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (13: 8)
 - He will appear at the onset of the tribulation period as the savior of the world
 - But in the end, he will enslave all mankind and force them to worship at his feet

What does the Bible say about his reign?

- Some we’ve already covered, but let me just give some highlights to his reign
 - First, as we’ve seen, he begins his reign with military and political precision
 - He comes to the political table with a 7 year peace treaty with Israel – ending the years of bloodshed
- And he has an intellect like no one has seen
 - Being empowered by Satan, he may be the most intelligent man, with the exception of Jesus, ever to have walked the planet.
 - Scripture tells us that, “Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule” (Dan. 8:24).
 - Of course these are characteristics common to many of the ruthless personalities who have squandered the lives of millions upon the stage of history,
 - but in the beast we find the ultimate effort that Satan can put forth in the way of cunning
- At the middle point of his 7 year peace treaty, he will break the covenant

- He will do so by exalting....
 - 2 Thes. 2:4” ...himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”
 - This is a specific word for temple here in the Greek – it’s the word for the holy of holies
 - He will sit in the temple , in the holy of holies and proclaim to be god almighty himself
 - Which, by the way, tells us plainly that there will be a Jewish temple in Israel at that time
- Which, by the way, tells us plainly that there will be a Jewish temple in Israel at that time
 - And if you’ve been watching, the tools for the temple have been being built for some time now
 - The bronze laver, the priestly garments, the golden lampstand..
 - Most of them all done already.
- All that needs to happen is for the temple to be built...
 - And don’t fret, it will – regardless of what sits on temple mount today

During his reign, the antichrist will reign and rule over a group of 10 nations

- More of which we will see later in our studies
 - Revelation 13 tells us that he is followed and receives worship from “all the world” (13:3-4),
 - And that he has authority over “every tribe, people, language and nation” (13:7).
 - From this we conclude that he will institute a one world government and one world religion
- Revelation 13, 14, 15, 16 and so on tell us that he will create a new type of currency
 - A cashless society
 - And bring a system into the world in which to buy things
- It will be a mark on the hand or forehead that will replace currency
 - And will have the markers 666 in some way attached to that
 - This mark acts as a seal for the followers of Antichrist and the false prophet (the spokesperson for the Antichrist).
 - The false prophet (the second beast) is the one who causes people to take this mark. The mark is literally

placed in the hand or forehead and is not simply a card someone carries.

At every turn, the goal of the antichrist is to gain allegiance from “those who dwell on the earth”

- Thankfully, in the mercy of God’s sovereign grace
 - There will be those who during the tribulation will come to know Jesus
 - They are commonly known as the tribulation saints
 - And, while they will incur much of the fallout of the judgement coming upon those who dwell on the earth
 - They will not take the mark of the beast themselves
- But it will be a horrendous time for them
 - However, it’s comforting to know that while we now do not know the day or the hour of Christ’s return
 - The tribulation saints will! There will be hope in that regard!
- The trib saints will see the abomination that causes desolation – when the antichrist exalts himself as god in the jewish temple
 - And when they see this, they will know they are half way through the trib period and that Christ’s return is 1260 from then

Even though the beast will deceive many, his days are numbered. His fate is already sealed

- Rev 19: **20** Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. **21** And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.”
 - 20: **10** The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where[b] the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever”

End with - Jesus is coming!

Which side are you on today? Are you in line with the Word of God?

- Have you trusted Jesus as your personal Savior?
 - If so, you will never see the Antichrist in this world.

- If so, then you will be in Heaven, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ while the world writhes under tribulation.
- If not, then you need to be saved! You are on the wrong side!
 - If the Lord doesn't come in your lifetime, you will die and go to Hell if you don't get right with God.
 - If He does come and finds you lost, you will enter into the Tribulation and you will give your worship to the Antichrist.
 - Where do you stand today?