It is ...



... the last hour

The antichrists have come ...

1. We know it is the last hour because many antichrists have arrived, 2:18.

- (1 John 2:18 ESV) Children, **it is the last hour**, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, **so now many antichrists have come**. **Therefore we know that it is the last hour**.

A. We know that it is the last hour because many antichrists have come—a decisive, conclusive statement.

Whatever a person may decide what the last hour is; it is decisive and conclusive that it is now the last hour.

Conclusive – ending any doubt or uncertainty about a situation; decisive, bringing something to a final end.

Definitive – final, conclusive, complete; not to be questioned or changed.

B. The antichrists are false prophets or false teachers.

- (1 John 4:1 ESV) Beloved, **do not believe every spirit**, **but test the spirits to see whether they are from God**, for ***many*** false prophets have gone out into the world.

2. Many antichrists have come but the antichrist is yet to come.

A. The antichrist was anticipated in prophecy but had not yet arrived.

B. The way that they would "have heard that antichrist is coming" would have been from Old Testament prophecies such as in Daniel.

- (Daniel 7:8 ESV) I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. **And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things**.
- (Daniel 9:27 ESV) **And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week**, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. **And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate**, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.

C. The antichrist is described as the man of lawlessness and also as the lawless one.

D. At a later stage of the last hour the man of lawlessness (the antichrist) will be revealed before the second coming of Christ.

- (2 Thessalonians 2:3 ESV) **Let no one deceive you in any way**. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction.

E. The deception of the lawless one is such that those who fall under his spell refuse to love the truth and not loving the truth they do not believe the truth.

- (2 Thessalonians 2:8–12 ESV) And then **the lawless one will be revealed**, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. 9 **The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan** with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that **they may believe what is false**, 12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Do we see the powerful principle here? To believe the truth one must love the truth.

F. Lawlessness is a lack of continual submission to, trust in and adherence to the word of God and is a defining characteristic of the antichrists.

3. The antichrists went out from the professing church, 2:19.

- (1 John 2:19 ESV) **They went out from us, but they were not of us**; for if they had been of us, **they would have continued with us**. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

A. The antichrists emerged from the true church.

B. The antichrists showed they were not of the true church when they did not continue in the truth of the gospel—what they had heard from the beginning.

C. To stand firm in the truth then we must be aware of the subtle, yet very dangerous, presence of antichrists in our midst.

4. Those anointed by the Spirit know the truth of the gospel—that Jesus is the Christ, 2:20-23.

- (1 John 2:20–23 ESV) But **you have been anointed by the Holy One**, and **you all have knowledge**. 21 I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the

truth. 22 **Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ**? **This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son**. 23 **No one who denies the Son has the Father**. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

What does it mean anointed by the Holy One? What does it mean you all have knowledge?

A. They had been chosen by God for a special purpose—to have fellowship with the Father and the Son and become part of the family of God forever.

Anoint … χρῖσμα [chrisma]–the act of applying oil or an oily liquid (to the head or some other part of the body); especially in order to dedicate a person or object to a particular service or function; to choose or designate someone for a special role, honor, or purpose; to choose by divine intervention.

B. They had full knowledge of the gospel—that believing Jesus is the Christ is how one has life in his name.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written **so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ**, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

C. We need to fully understand what it means to confess or deny that Jesus is the Christ.

D. Jesus is the Christ the Messiah of the OT.

E. His suffering and death for his people are clearly prophesied in Isaiah 53.

- (Isaiah 53 NLT) Who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed his powerful arm? 2 My servant grew up in the LORD's presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. 3 **He was despised and rejected— a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief**. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. 4 Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! 5 But **he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins**. He was **beaten** so we could be whole. He was **whipped** so we could be healed. 6 All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet **the LORD laid on him the sins of us all**. 7 He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. 8 **Unjustly condemned, he was led away**. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But **he was struck down for the rebellion of my people**. 9 **He had done no wrong** and had never deceived anyone. But **he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave**. 10 But **it was the LORD's good plan** to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when **his life is made an offering for sin**, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands. 11 When he sees **all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied**. And because of his experience, **my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous**, **for he will bear all their sins**. 12 I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. **He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels**.

Huge Lesson: Even though Christ had not yet died on the cross to believe in him included his death on the cross for sinful humans even as he walked the Earth. Believing they had life in his name–everything about him and what he would accomplish.

5. The anointed of God must let the truth of the gospel continue in our lives resulting in eternal life, 2:24-25.

- (1 John 2:24–25 ESV) **Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you**. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.

A. They needed to let the truth of the gospel which they had heard from the beginning remain in them.

B. If the truth of the gospel remained in them, then they would remain in the Son and in the Father.

Abide … μένω [meno] – to continue in, remain; not to depart; to continue to be present; to be held, kept, continually; in reference to state or condition; to remain as one, not to become another or different.

C. This is the doctrine of the endurance of the saints—God's promise of eternal life to those who endure to the end.

- (Colossians 1:21–23 ESV) And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 **if indeed you continue in the faith**, stable and steadfast, **not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard**, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

6. The anointed of God must be prepared for those who will try to deceive, 2:26-27.

- (1 John 2:26–27 ESV) **I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you**. 27 But **the anointing that you received from him abides in you**, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. **But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true**, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

A. To hold fast to the gospel we must live with a real awareness of the pervasive presence of those who would deceive—the antichrists.

- (1 Corinthians 15:1–2 ESV) **Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you**, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, **if you hold fast to the word I preached to you**—unless you believed in vain.

Hold fast ... κατέχω [katecho] – to hold, adhere; to remain firmly committed to; to stick to firmly; whether in a physical or abstract sense.

- (Hebrews 4:14 ESV) Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, **let us hold fast our confession**.
- (Hebrews 10:23 ESV) **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering**, for he who promised is faithful.
- (Revelation 2:25 ESV) **Only hold fast what you have until I come**.

B. Once we know the truth of the gospel we have no need for someone to teach us "more" truth about the gospel—we have all we need.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) **For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received**: **that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures**, 4 **that** he was buried, **that** he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

C. The knowledge of the word of the truth of the gospel we received from the apostles gives us everything we need to know about the gospel.

- (Colossians 1:5b–6 ESV) **Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel**, 6 which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, **since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth**.

7. CONCLUSION: The children of God abide in Christ in anticipation of his appearance, 2:28-29

- (1 John 2:28–29 ESV) And now, little children, **abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming**. 29 If you know that he is righteous, **you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him**.

A. Abiding in Christ yields boldness and a straightforward attitude in service to him.

Confidence ... παρρησία [parrhesia] – freedom in speaking, unreservedness in speech; openly, frankly; direct answers without concealment; boldness; being willing to undertake activities that involve risk or danger; especially that involve being honest and straightforward in attitude and speech.

B. Abiding in Christ we practice righteousness and will not be shamed at his coming.

C. Practicing righteousness provides assurance that we have been born of God.

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