

Eternity Past

Eternity Future

The LandBetween

M I N I S T R I E S

The mission of the LandBetween Ministries is to equip leaders to fulfill Christ's Great Commission of heart-focused discipleship in a broken world.

Newsletter

Volume IX Issue No. 1 — JANUARY 2016

"...and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard is coming and now it is already in the world." 1 John 4:3

"IF YOU ARE REVILED FOR THE NAME OF CHRIST, YOU ARE BLESSED, BECAUSE THE SPIRIT OF GLORY AND OF GOD RESTS ON YOU." — 1 PETER 4:14

The Spirit of Antichrist - Pt. 2

In John's 1st Epistle, he warned his first century audience about the spirit of Antichrist that was negatively impacting the body of Christ (1 John 4:3). Any Antichrist is a liar (1 John 2:22) and from the enemy.

Jesus boldly told the religious leaders of His day that their spiritual father was the devil who was a murderer and a liar (John 8:44). Today, lying and the spirit of Antichrist continue their destructiveness.

HONEST BELIEF ABOUT JESUS

A growing trend in the world is the lie: "We all serve the same God." However, when you see the vast increase of Christians being killed or displaced in the past decade, the false belief, "We all serve the same God" is disconnected from reality.

If you want to know what someone really believes about God, discover what they believe about Jesus. If someone says to you, "I believe in Jesus," it is good to ask them what they mean. Many people, especially outside of North America, believe Jesus is a bastard. Why? Because they

wrongly believe God the Father had relations with Mary, which produced an illegitimate son called Jesus. This is why a rather high number of people believe the Godhead consists of God the Father, Mary, and Jesus; this disagrees with Scriptural teaching. When a believer in Christ is sharing the Gospel with others, they need to recognize that some may say, "I believe



in Jesus." But, that may not mean they believe Jesus is God, which is clearly taught in the Bible (John 1:1; 1 John 4:15 and many other verses). The spirit of Antichrist is deceptive, because a lot of cults may not deny Jesus existed; but, they will deny Jesus is God or deny He is the only way to be accepted by the Heavenly Father, or that Jesus died on a cross to pay for sin, or rose from the dead. It is as if

Satan knows that a total rejection of Jesus would not be palatable for many, so he "tweaks" religious doctrines so that people are falsely taught that faith in Christ alone is not enough and that a religious leader or organization is needed to make one acceptable to God.

If an arch (see photo to the left) is missing one stone, the arch will collapse. It's the same when it comes to what one believes about Jesus. If someone refuses to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and came in the flesh, they are in agreement with the spirit of Antichrist. If someone misses the truth of who Jesus is, their soul and life will suffer. They will not have the peace their heart longs for (John 14:17; 26-27).

In Mark 8:27, Jesus and His disciples were in an area plagued by the worship of gods and idols. Jesus asked His disciples a general question, "Who do the people say that I am?" Then, in Mark 8:29, Jesus became more specific by asking, "Who do you say that I am?" and Peter responded, "You are the Christ" (Anointed One, Messiah). Why would Jesus ask the disciples what they said about Him? One reason is that Jesus knew that after His earthly ministry was complete, the early New Covenant believers would contend with

the spirit of Antichrist who was out to lie and distort the truth about Him. John writes that many people had the spirit of Antichrist (1 John 2:18) in the first century. These many Antichrists were undercutting the full truth about Jesus, leading people to eternal separation from God.

ANTI-CHRISTIANITES

The spirit of Antichrist is rooted in the enemy. The temptations of Jesus reveal some of the enemy's tactics. One of these tactics can be called: TAKE—TWIST—TURN. In Luke 4:5-7 the devil TAKES the position that all authority over all the kingdoms had been given to him, which was a lie. The devil then TWISTS the truth about what he is allowed to give away, and then TURNS on Jesus with a hypocritical, mocking offer: "Therefore, if you will worship before me, all will be Yours." In the temptations, the devil has the tone of a "sincere liar" in that he comes across so sure of himself and he appears to own everything (but the devil does *not* own anything). To a casual listener, the devil might actually seem in charge. But, Jesus did not fall prey to Satan's presumptions and lies.

Anti-Christianites have used the TAKE—TWIST—TURN tactic in universities for years. Antichrists TAKE Genesis 1:28 where God says to "be fruitful and multiply" and TWIST this verse out of context; then, TURN it against Christians by blaming them for the assumed "overpopulation" problem. The truth is that there is not an overpopulation problem. There are plenty of resources for everyone, if only they were well-managed. Corrupt, selfish, Antichrist leaders block food from getting to the starving.

Anti-Christianites, whether in the media or other arenas, do not care about the truth about Christ or His followers. But, they do have a planned, well-supported agenda to shame believers from having faith in Christ and believing the Bible. Anti-Christians make it sound like if followers of Christ were wiped off the earth, the world would be a utopia. The truth is that when believers in Christ are persecuted and killed, as is increasingly taking place, it only leads to violence and hate, destroying peace and joy.

Further, Anti-Christianites TAKE the second part of Genesis 1:28, "...fill the earth and subdue it..." and TWIST it completely out of context by claiming the Bible teaches that the earth can be ravaged and polluted. Then, the Anti-Christianites TURN on Christians and make it sound as if Christians are responsible for polluting the world's environment. But, the truth is that the most polluted countries in the world are very Anti-Christian. The truth is that genuine followers of Christ care for the well-being of the environment and are responsible stewards of resources.

Anti-Christianites TAKE loving, peaceful disagreements by Christians on moral issues and TWIST these disagreements out of context; then, TURN on Christians by falsely accusing them of hate, bigotry, or prejudice. Anti-Christianites TAKE "love" and TWIST it out of context by equating "love" with the approval of all sexual sins, then angrily TURN on anyone who disagrees with them.

Anti-Christianites also TAKE certain examples of God's judgment in the Old Testament and Jesus' prophecies of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD; then, they TWIST these judgments into making it sound like the Father and His Son are quick-tempered, angry, and emotionally disturbed. Finally, they TURN these lies about God and His Son and falsely label followers of Christ as angry, etc., and a "danger" to society. But, the truth is that God is love and has always been very slow to anger (Psalm 103:8) and is not impulsive. The first century religious leaders spoke audacious lies about Jesus and petitioned the Romans to kill Him. However, Jesus gave His killers and others a forty-year warning before He judged Jerusalem's Temple (Matthew 24:1-2). If Jesus was "reactionary" or "dangerous" why would He warn His killers precisely what would happen leading up to His judgment on 70 AD? If Jesus was quick-tempered, vindictive, or hateful, why did He give His killers and others ample time to flee for safety and get out of Jerusalem before His judgment on 70 AD?

Jesus, in His mercy, not only warned about His judgement on those who violated His Father's Temple, He prophesied

that there would be those coming who would be false christs and false prophets (Antichrists) and His followers would suffer for His sake (Mark 13:9; 21-23).

BLINDSIDED

The wars, earthquakes, false christs, false prophets, and other troubles Jesus predicted, took place just as Jesus prophesied before He came in judgment through the Romans in 70 AD. In contrast to Jesus' accurate prophecies, certain Bible prophecy teachers, especially over the past 140 years, have been repeatedly inaccurate. Today's popular Western-based teaching that one man will be the future Antichrist, and the Pre-Tribulation Rapture is coming, has misled millions of Christians.

A quip among various believers is that they are "Pan-Trib" when it comes to their belief about when the Tribulation period may take place. These believers think that Bible prophecy will just "pan out." But, accurate Bible prophecy is very important. Believers in Asia and other places have been wrongly taught that the seven-year Tribulation and Antichrist are things coming in the future and the church will be "raptured away" prior to harsh persecution. These mis-taught believers were incredibly disheartened they were not "raptured" away before they were blindsided with severe tribulation.

Dr. Gary DeMar writes: "Many people prior to Jerusalem's destruction on 70 AD questioned and disputed basic Christian doctrines like the resurrection (2 Timothy 2:18)" and that people were being taught "strange doctrines." DeMar aptly goes on, "It is inappropriate to look for a contemporary rising political leader and describe him as *the* Antichrist. Such a designation cannot be supported from Scripture. Does this mean that the *spirit* of Antichrist cannot be present in our day? Not at all." (DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, 225, 228).

It is true that the spirit of Antichrist is active *right now*; yet, regardless what Antichrist people may do to you, you can trust in Jesus, who is God. In His time, He will judge your persecutors (1 Peter 4:5). *Joel Francis is a graduate of Michigan State University and Dallas Theological Seminary. The LandBetween Ministries is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 2004.*