

## **A Study of the Antichrists of First John 2:18-27 by Christopher Young (2000)**

The author of 1 John 2:18-27 described a secessionist movement within the Johannine community as "antichrists." By innovatively reshaping the antichrist tradition he argued that not just one antichrist but many had appeared thus signaling the arrival of the eschatological moment.

Commentators on this subject demonstrated that the antichrists were secessionists who attacked the church from within by claiming to be anointed prophets while they were denying, "Jesus is the Christ." Scholars interpreted the "antichrist" language either by appealing to other apocalyptic texts like Revelation and 2 Thessalonians where the antichrist figure is overtly opposed to God, or they interpreted the text within the confines of the Johannine Epistles alone thus concluding the antichrists were charismatically inclined heretics. While both approaches provide insight, this thesis argues that the richness of the term, "antichrist" is better understood by including the Ephesian context in the discussion. By examining other literature of the period relating to the Ephesian church, a greater appreciation is developed for the prolonged intensity of the secessionists challenge.

The author of 1 John with masterful skill reveals his opponents true colours, he brings together in one word the diverse traditions of opposition to God to describe his opponents, they are antichrists.