



Daily Devotionals

[click here to go to website – stmatthewsrichmond.org](http://stmatthewsrichmond.org)

1 JOHN 2:18-23 WHAT IS TRUTH?

18 Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. 21 I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. 22 Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

When we see the statement, "this is the last hour," visions of street-corner prophets bearing sandwich boards declaring that the end of the world is near and shrilly proclaiming that everyone must repent or perish arise in our minds. Although the need for repentance is urgent and true, predictions of the immanent end of the world have little effect on us because they have been uttered so often with no fulfillment. But this is not what St. John is writing about. In Scripture, the last hour or last days is the period of time between Pentecost and the Second Coming. It is the age of the Spirit when people can know God and his will through the indwelling Spirit. This period was prophesied in the Old Testament by, among others, Jeremiah.

33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 31:33-34)

In short, the Truth about God and the world will be revealed by God to the people of the world. Those who believe the Truth will be the Church, while those who refuse to acknowledge the Truth will devise ways of denying it. These people will be found even in the institutional church, and the Apostle would not have us ignorant of that fact.

Throughout the history of the Church this attitude has been manifested as heresy, division and persecution. Today the major tool of denial is pluralism and a godless form of tolerance. The antichrists about which St. John warns the Church are not demonic figures with great powers, but rather are those who arise in the world and the church that teach things that are against the Truth that is revealed by Jesus Christ. To declare that which is revealed as sin in Scripture not to be sin is to call God a liar. To say that there are many truths and that all religions or sincerely held beliefs lead to God is to call the Spirit a liar. To deny that repentance and obedience to God and following Jesus Christ is the only way to reconciliation with God is to call the Son Incarnate a liar. The fact is that all these attitudes are "antichrist" and can only lead people away from Jesus.

Lord save us from ourselves and our desire to justify how we would naturally live. Open my ears to the voice of your Spirit and renew my heart with your

words of Truth. Guard me from the siren voices of the culture in which I live and even from those in the church that would deny your Truth. Strengthen me to test all the spirits against the Truth of your Word as revealed in Scripture. Amen.

Chuck+