

ANTICHRIST

ἀντίχριστος

The word enters human literature in the letters of John; no writer before him is known to have used it. Its force is double: an enemy standing **against** Christ, and a counterfeit standing **in place** of him.

5	4	2	1	0	∞
USES IN SCRIPTURE	VERSES	LETTERS: 1 & 2 JOHN	BIBLICAL AUTHOR	USES IN REVELATION	MANY ANTICHRISTS

I THE WORD JOHN COINED

1 John 2:18, 22; 4:2–3 · 2 John 7

ἀντί + χριστός

PREFIX + ANOINTED ONE

AGAINST

OPPOSITION · OPEN ENMITY

The adversary in the field: force, threat, persecution. Visible, and therefore easier to resist.

INSTEAD OF

SUBSTITUTION · COUNTERFEIT

The rival in the pulpit: mimicry, a false savior offered in Christ's own name. Hidden, and harder to name.

John's usage holds both charges at once. **The Antichrist opposes Christ precisely by imitating him.**

HOW JOHN IDENTIFIES ONE

Three denials, not a list of predictions:

- Jesus Christ has not come in real flesh. **1 Jn 4:2–3; 2 Jn 7**
- Jesus is not the Christ. **1 Jn 2:22**
- Losing the Son, he loses the Father too. **1 Jn 2:22–23**

Every test is christological. John asks nothing about politics or dates, and everything about the confession of Jesus in the flesh.

THE ONE AND THE MANY

"Children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come." **1 John 2:18**

The many were teachers who had left the fellowship, holding that the Son of God never truly took flesh, bled, or died. John names a **spirit of antichrist** already at work **1 Jn 4:3**, and warns the churches against watching the horizon while the danger sits in the room.

II THE APOCALYPSE: A PARODY OF GOD

Revelation 12–13, 17–18

Popular imagination puts the Antichrist in Revelation. **The word never appears there.** A counterfeit trinity appears instead.

THE TRIUNE GOD AND HIS BRIDE	THE COUNTERFEIT
The Father Gives the Son his throne and authority	The Dragon The invisible mastermind, who hands over his throne, his power, and great authority Rev 12:9; 13:2
The Son The Lamb slain and living	The Beast from the Sea Rises from the chaos of the deep, a mortal wound healed: seven heads, ten horns, blasphemous names, worship taken by force Rev 13:1–8
The Holy Spirit Glorifies the Son, never himself	The Beast from the Earth Two horns like a lamb, the voice of a dragon; works signs, turns the world's worship toward the first beast Rev 13:11–18
The Bride The woman clothed with the sun Rev 12:1	Babylon the Harlot In scarlet and gold, riding the beast, drunk on the blood of the saints Rev 17:3–6

THE FIRST BEAST · AGAINST

The Political Beast

Coercive state power in every age, modeled in John's day by imperial Rome. It kills the body, takes the property, and demands the loyalty owed to God alone.

Co-conspirator, not counterfeit: its enmity is worn on the outside, where anyone can see it.

THE SECOND BEAST · INSTEAD OF

The Religious Beast

Lamb-like in appearance, dragon-like in speech. It counterfeits religion rather than denying it, and borrows the state's sword to enforce what it teaches.

This is the figure answering to John's word, holding the place a lamb should hold.

ONE CREATURE, THREE FORMS

Beast from the Earth **Rev 13:11** → False Prophet **Rev 16:13; 19:20; 20:10** → Babylon the Harlot **Rev 17–18**

τὸ πνεῦμα
τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου

THE SPIRIT OF THE ANTICHRIST · 1 JOHN 4:3

John gives the churches a test rather than a timetable. Whoever confesses Jesus Christ come in the flesh is of God, and whoever will not is the very spirit the apostle names. Sheet two takes up Daniel's little horn, Paul's man of lawlessness, and the verdict of the Lutheran Confessions.