

directive for all to follow that would allow them to be properly prepared and able to stand against the false prophets.

BD3: A Directive for All (1JN 2.24-27)

BKGRND: How do we prepare for the storm? We choose our clothes wisely, we **“batten down the hatches”**—we ensure we have everything we need ahead of the danger that could be coming. And that’s exactly what **JN** calls for the church to do as they faced the danger of the antichrists: but in their case, the clothes they were to put on was Christ, Himself.

1JN 2.24-27 (NKJV) ~ *Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. ²⁶ These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. ²⁷ But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.*

EX: JN called for the church to take direction and comfort and guidance for that anointing: their education, their conversion, their baptism, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and His Word. For that would strength them—that would guide them. That would protect them.

AP: I look out, sometimes, and I see people caught out in the storm with without a jacket, without an umbrella—or out on a motorcycle, without even a roof to protect them. And that always saddens me. But far worse are those who go out and face against the false words of false prophets without the protection that comes from anointing of His Spirit-Filled Word.

PV 30.5 (NKJV) ~ *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

CONCLUSION (1JN 2.28-29)

ENTERTAINMENT/Weather Forecasts/George Cowling – Death

Now, all these years later, we take the advantages of modern satellites and forecasters for granted. We expect and anticipate accuracy, and we get annoyed when they’re wrong.

Similarly, throughout the church’s history, people have been fascinated by the concept of “the antichrist”. Many forecasters have preached and presented days and dates of his coming. But only the inspired writers of Scripture got it right.

JN wrote to his beloved brethren—seeking to prepare them for a terrible forecast—that their future would be “cloudy, with a change of antichrists”. And to prepare them for it, he gave **a command to all**—to love the Lord and not the world. For he knew something that he would speak in **warning** to them: that the antichrists had come—tempted by their love of the world to leave their love of God. **But how would they be about to be prepared?** He reveals the answer in **a directive for all**—to let the anointing of the Spirit and His Word abide in them—directing and guiding them.

1JN 2.28-29 (NKJV) ~ *And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. ²⁹ If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.*

INVITATION

#660 [EXP-NTGE][3.6]
08/18/2025

Cloudy, with a Chance of Antichrists

1JN 2.12-29

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QUESTION: What can we learn from John’s forecast of the Antichrists?

TRN TO 1JN 2

INTRODUCTION

ENTERTAINMENT/Weather Forecasts/George Cowling – the First Weatherman

Whether you get your weather report from an app on your phone, your Alexa, or the morning new broadcast, today’s weather reporting finds its origin in the example and the pioneering work of **“Mr. West and Mr. Dry”**. And with them comes one of the oldest jokes in the book: **“Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me; fool me any more times, and you must be the weatherman”**.

I always say, it’s got to be nice to be a weatherman; **what other job allows you to be wrong time and time again and still be able to come back in to work?** But in fact, it’s hard to make accurate predictions. Sometimes you’re right, but most of the time, you’re wrong. And as we find ourselves in **1JN 2**, we see that John was about to make a bold forecast—but in his case, it was one that would prove true. As we look at **1JN 2.12-29**, we see him promising a future that would be **“cloudy, with a chance of Antichrists”**.

BACKGROUND: Who Were They to Him? (1JN 2.12-14)

As we’ve been discussing over the past two weeks, **JN** was writing to a group of Christians who were undergoing a major challenge brought on by the Gnostic sect. They proclaimed a belief in Christ, but their Christ was quite different from the one that John knew—a Christ of pure Spirit, rather than incarnate: God in the flesh. **How would JN convince the church of the truth of the pure Gospel when it was under constant attack?** Interestingly, he did so with a combination of both reason and emotion. In the last chapter and a half, he’d argued that the incarnate nature of Christ was true: that Christ is Real—and because He’s real, **we ought to walk in the way that He walked**. But next, he turns to another method of persuasion: rather than answering what God was to Christians to whom he wrote, John answered what they were to him.

1JN 2.12-14 (NKJV) ~ *I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake. ¹³ I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. ¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.*

EX: “Little children”...“fathers”...“young men”...With this poetic language, he refers to the Brethren—young and old—as being like beloved children to him. He calls them to remember both their sin and their forgiveness, their knowledge of the Incarnate Son, and their having overcome the Devil and his wiles. **“Little children”...“fathers”...“young men”**...He repeats the poetry to emphasize their relationship with one another and with him, and he calls them to remember their

knowledge of the Father, the Son (who was from the beginning), and their strength, with the Spirit-given word dwelling within them.

ILL—Point of a Weather Forecast (the reason we care so much or a solid forecast is so we can prepare for it; wear the right clothes, bring the right gear; cancel events that would be affected) It's good to be able to be ready for what's coming.

AP: We don't know much about what the Christians to whom **JN** wrote were like. But all of them, "**Little children**"... "**fathers**"... "**young men**"... were united together. And that was important: for **JN** knew that there was something coming that they needed to be ready for. But before he'd get into that, he had something to give to all the disciples: "**Little children**"... "**fathers**"... "**young men**"... he presented a **command to all**.

BD1: A Command to All (1JN 2.15-17)

1JN 2.15-17 (NKJV) ~ *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

EX: The phrase "*the world*" can be used in a few different ways in the Bible. It can be used neutrally (ex: *the foundation of the world*), positively (ex: *For God so loved the world*), or as it's used here, negatively. In cases like this, "*the world*" is a stand-in for everything temporal and temporary. **JN**'s **command to all** was to stand up against those desires that war within us and, instead, to stand for *the love of the Father*.

He gives an example: *the lust of the flesh* (the desires for things that bring pleasure to our temporal bodies), *the lust of the eyes* (the desires for things that bring joy to our inner being), and *the pride of life* (the desires for things that raise us up above others—even, in our mind, God). He says that we need to cast aside all these things which all serve as a form of love for the world and, instead, embrace a true and abiding *love of the Father*.

RM 12.1-2 (NKJV) ~ *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

AP: John is calling for the church to put on Christ—the same way we'd put on a protective jacket or cloak. And that call persists today!

RM 13.11-14 (NKJV) ~ *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. ¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

In the case of **1JN**, though, there was a particular thing that he knew was coming—a **warning for all** that would make sense of his call for them to cast aside the world and cling to Christ. For as we read on, we discover a terrible truth: a storm was coming.

BD2: A Warning for All (1JN 2.18-23)

BKGRND: Many Christian churches today argue about and wonder about the coming of "**the Antichrist**". The image is of a mighty, supernaturally powerful single figure who will rise up like Christ, but His opposite. Some even argue his birth will serve as a dark echo of Christ's—there are countless books and movies that speak to that!

1JN 2.18 (NKJV) ~ *Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.*

People look to passages like this one, and they pour over them—seeking to prepare themselves and plan for the "**coming of the Antichrist**"—which seems to always be nearly here. Interestingly, it looks like there was a similar mindset in **JN**'s time. They'd heard the preaching of Christ and others about the coming of "*antichrist*" (note, not "**the antichrist**", as many modern translations frame it—the Greek simply states, *ἀντίχριστος*: "**antichrist**"). John reveals here that, while they were all wondering when "**antichrist**" would come, they'd missed that many had already arrived. The storm had already arrived!

1JN 2.19 (NKJV) ~ *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 they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.*

Who were "the antichrists" that John was referencing? It was the Gnostic teachers. But what's worse wasn't just that they were Gnostics: it was that they were former faithful Christians who'd allowed their *lust of the flesh*, *lust of the eyes*, and *pride of life* to bring their love out of sync with the Father and back towards the world.

But how were they to know the difference? Again, **JN** points back to their faith: their knowledge—their anointing. This is likely a reference to some combination of their education, their conversion, their baptism, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and His Word. All of these things meant that they knew "**all things**". **Wait, all things? Literally?** Well, yes, and no. They knew all that they needed to know.

2PT 1.2-4 (NKJV) ~ *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

1JN 2.21-23 (NKJV) ~ *I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*

EX: All that they knew should make it clear to them that these false prophets—these Gnostics—who denied that Jesus was the Christ, God in the Flesh, were not Christians—they were "**antichrist**".

AP: Does this mean, then, that there is no "antichrist"? Not at all—there were several then. There are several now: people who have, like them, allowed their *lust of the flesh*, *lust of the eyes*, and *pride of life* to bring their love out of sync with the Father and back towards the world. And **JN** had some final advice for the church: a