

The [Antichrist](#)

The biblical portrait of the [Antichrist](#) has evoked much interest not only in Christian circles but in secular culture, being grist for the mill of Hollywood movies and bizarre novels. The Antichrist is the ultimate villain, the supreme “black hat” who embodies to the nth degree all that is evil.

The New Testament portrait of the [Antichrist](#) is somewhat enigmatic. There is much [confusion](#) and debate that focuses upon his role and nature. The term *anti-* that is used to describe him (or it) can mean either “against” or “in place of.” The [Antichrist](#) is one who not only opposes Christ, but seeks to usurp the rightful place of Christ. He seeks to substitute himself for Christ. The Antichrist, therefore, is a false Christ, who seeks to deceive people into thinking that he is the true Christ.

Debate has ensued about the identity of the Antichrist. Is the [Antichrist](#) a person, a power, or an institution? Is the Antichrist a religious or a political figure, or both? Is there only one Antichrist, or are there many? The Antichrist has been identified at times by Christians as a particular person in history such as Nero, Hitler, and Mussolini, just to name a few. Many Protestants have identified the papacy of Rome as the institution of antichrist, while others look to a yet unrevealed figure or power to be the Antichrist.

John speaks of “many antichrists” (1 John 2:18) and of the “spirit of Antichrist” that was “already in the world” (1 John 4:3). We can conclude from this that during the period between the apostolic age and the return of [Christ](#) there are to be many manifestations of antichrist, at least in spirit and power.

The apostle Paul indicates that a special manifestation of [antichrist](#) will appear before the final coming of Christ. This “man of sin” will come in accordance with the working of Satan and will have his seal of power in

the “temple of God” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12). Some believe this can only occur if temple worship is restored to the nation of Israel, others interpret it as a reference to an appearance in the New Testament “temple,” the Christian church.

The coming of the [Antichrist](#) is linked with a great apostasy in the church. [Perhaps](#) an alliance between secular [government](#) and religious institutions is in view. The goal of the Antichrist is to make war on the people of God and to seek the destruction of [Christ](#) and His Kingdom. The [Bible](#) assures us, however, that despite the tremendous power and influence of the Antichrist, his defeat, judgment, and doom are sure. He is no match, in the final analysis, for the true and living Christ.

Summary

1. The [Antichrist](#) works both “against” and “in place of” Christ.
2. [Antichrist](#) has been manifested throughout church history in persons and institutions.
3. The [Bible](#) foretells a special manifestation of [antichrist](#) with extraordinary power and influence at the end of the age.
4. The [Antichrist](#) will be defeated by Christ.

Tags: [Theology](#)