Introduction:
1. If you ask 100 people in the world today, “who is the antichrist?” you will likely end up with a hundred different answers.
   a. Some reformers said that “the antichrist” is the Pope.
   b. Whenever any major world events happen, you hear new people described as “the antichrist.”
      i. Saddam Hussein was billed as the antichrist for a while.
      ii. Some said it was Adolf Hitler.
      iii. A somewhat recent survey said that 10% of Americans think Barak Obama is the antichrist.
2. Why are there all these different views?
3. If the identity of the antichrist is as spelled out in the Bible as some people claim, why can no one agree on who it is?
4. Does the Bible even claim that there is an antichrist which is to come near the end of the world?
   a. If you listen to most of the religious world, the answer is ABSOLUTELY!
   b. However, if you just look at the Bible for the answer, you might find yourself surprised.
5. Before we get into what the Bible says on the matter, we are going to look at what the prevailing theories and beliefs are regarding this mysterious “antichrist.”

I. Prevalent beliefs about “the Antichrist.”
   A. “The Antichrist is a future world leader who sets himself up as a Messiah, but will really lead people away from Christ.”
      1. How many times throughout history has someone set himself up as a savior of his people, but leads them away from Christ?
      2. This description could be applied to literally hundreds of leaders over the past 2,000 years (and this is why there is no agreement over who this “antichrist” is supposed to be).
      3. This is such a common occurrence, it boggles the mind how someone can say with any assurance that they know exactly which one God was talking about (IF God indeed was speaking about a future world leader).
   B. “The Antichrist” is the same as “the man of sin” from II Thessalonians 2.
      1. Just like the “antichrist,” opinions are all over the board as to who the “man of sin” is.
      2. Most reformers (and even many members of the church) said that the “man of sin” is a description of the Papacy (the Popes of the Catholic Church).
      3. The Catholic Study Bible has a footnote which says the “man of sin” was Martin Luther.
      4. It is quite possible, however, that the “man of sin” Paul was describing was Nero himself or one of the other early Roman Emperors (but that is not the topic of today’s lesson).
      5. The “man of sin” was already working at the time when Paul wrote II Thessalonians (II Thessalonians 2:7).
      6. So, if the Antichrist is the same as the man of sin, and he is a future world leader, he ought to be really easy to spot: just look for the 2,000 year-old man.
   C. “The Antichrist will come to power shortly before Jesus comes back.”
      1. This theory comes because some assume that “the day of Christ” in II Thessalonians 2:2 is referring to the end of the world, and that the “man of sin” in the same chapter is “the Antichrist.”
2. This theory also leans on a futuristic view of the book of Revelation (which also
cannot be true because John said all the things in the book were about to
happen 2,000 years ago).

D. These beliefs are what men teach about “the Antichrist,” but what saith the Scriptures?

II. The term “antichrist.”

A. The word translated “antichrist” is ANTICHRISTOS, and it simply means one who is
against Christ.

1. “Anti” means “against.”
2. “Christ” means “anointed one” (in the NT is refers to the one who was anointed
by God, the Messiah, Jesus).
3. So, literally, the term means someone who is opposed to Christ.
4. Strong’s defines it as “an opponent of the Messiah.”

B. Because of the meaning of the term, it COULD be applied to anyone who is opposed to
Christ.

1. Were the Pharisees anti-Christ? Yes.
2. Were the Jews anti-Christ? Yes.
3. Are atheists anti-Christ? Yes.

C. The word “antichrist” appears five times in the Bible (one of them being plural), all in
the books of I and II John.

1. These passages are I John 2:18, 22, 4:3, and II John 7.
2. It might be quickly observed by some that in the King James Version the phrase
“THE antichrist” never appears.
   a. However, it DOES appear in Greek in I John 2:18 – “ye have heard that
      THE antichrist shall come.”
      1) Literally it is “and you have heard that the one opposed to
         Christ is coming.”
   b. The phrase “THE antichrist” also appears in I John 4:3 – “And this is the
      thing of the antichrist.”
      1) Literally, it says “and this is the thing [most Bibles insert the
         word spirit instead of thing] of the one opposed to Christ.”
   c. The phrase “THE antichrist” also appears in II John 7 – “This is a deceiver
      and the antichrist.”
      1) Literally it says, “this is the deceiver and the one opposed to
         Christ.”
3. The word antichrist is never used as a title or name of someone, but is used as a
description of them (remember: the word means one opposed to Christ).

D. Is there only one “antichrist”?

1. Remember, remember, remember that the word means “one opposed to
   Christ.”
   a. Is there only one person opposed to Christ?
   b. All you have to do is look around to see that there are many people
      opposed to Christ today (and there were then as well).
2. John himself said that while he was alive there were already “many antichrists”
working (I John 2:18).
   a. If there were already many of them when John wrote, how is it that
      there is only one???
   b. This statement alone obliterates the idea that there is one Antichrist.
III. A look at the verses which discuss “antichrist.”

A. I John 2:18 – “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.”

1. Literally, John says “little children, it is the last hour, according to what you have heard, that the one opposed to Christ is coming. Even now there are many opposed to Christ, by this we know that it is the last hour.”

2. John is saying, “you’ve heard that when the antichrist comes, the last hour is here? Well there now are many antichrists, so now is that time.”

3. The idea of a future world ruler cannot be substantiated from this verse, because John places him/them in his own time, 2,000 years ago.

4. This verse also shows there is not a singular antichrist under consideration because there were already “many” when he wrote!

5. What is the “last time” or “last hour”?
   a. Since this book was likely written before the fall of Jerusalem, John may be referring to that event as being very near.
   b. The Jews associated the destruction of Jerusalem with the end of the world or age (Matthew 24:1-3).
   c. Jesus said that before the destruction of Jerusalem, many false Christs would appear, trying to lead people astray (Matthew 24:24).
   d. Basically, it appears John is saying that what Jesus had prophesied was coming true, and it was about to come to a head in the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem.

6. John said that these ones opposed to Christ went out from us, but were not really “one of our number.”
   a. Some say this means that they went out from the Jerusalem church (where John was known to be a pillar – Galatians 2:9), but that they weren’t actually ever truly converted to Christ.
   b. Others say that this means they claimed to be sent from the apostles, but that they never were really associated with the apostles.
   c. It is best understood, I think, as they claimed to be Christians but either were never truly converted or that they had fallen away.

B. I John 2:22 – “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.”

1. Literally, John says “who is a liar if not the one denying that Jesus is the Christ? He is THE antichrist (one opposed to Christ), the one denying the Father and the Son.”

2. John identifies the “antichrist” for us in this verse!
   a. The antichrist is the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ!
   b. The antichrist is the one who denies the Father and the Son!

3. Who could this describe?
   a. The Jews denied that Jesus was the Christ (and still do).
   b. The Jews denied the Father and the Son (they rejected Jesus as the Son of God, and by doing so deny God’s word).
   c. The Gnostics denied that Jesus (God) came in the flesh.
   d. The Gnostics denied that Jesus was the Son of God (unless possibly He was adopted by God at His baptism).
   e. Atheists adamantly deny both of those as well.
4. If there is only one antichrist, then—by definition in this verse—there is only one person who has denied or will ever deny that Jesus is the Christ.
   a. “Liar” is singular, “he” is singular, and “antichrist” is singular.
   b. If there is only one antichrist, there is only one liar...EVER.
   c. We know that there are multiple liars (all liars will be thrown in the lake of fire and brimstone – Revelation 21:8).
   d. We know there are multiple antichrists (1 John 2:18).
5. Again, this verse shows that there is not a singular future ruler described as “THE Antichrist” spoken of in the Bible.

C. I John 4:3 – every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. And this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.
   1. Basically, John says every spirit who doesn’t confess that Jesus came in the flesh is not from God. And this is the thing [spirit] of the antichrist that you heard was coming. Now it’s already here.
   2. John gives a description of the one opposed to Christ:
      a. You heard it was coming, and now it’s already here.
      b. He is one who denies that Jesus came in the flesh.
      c. This verse again shows that whoever “the antichrist” is was already there in the first century.
   3. When we speak, we would say “the one who does this...” and not really refer to one specific person, but anyone who does that thing.
      a. John does the same thing with the use of the word “antichrist.”
      b. It means “one opposed to Christ.”
      c. So, the one who doesn’t confess Jesus came in the flesh is showing the spirit of one opposed to Christ.

D. II John 7 – for many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a (THE) deceiver and an (THE) antichrist.
   1. Notice what John says: many deceivers ARE ENTERED (past tense) into the world, and these are (present tense) the antichrist.
   2. John again clearly states that whoever “The Antichrist” is was already around during HIS lifetime!
   3. Again, he describes the many who don’t confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh as antichrist.
   4. Just a few verses later, John says that Christians should not even bid God-speed to them because then we become a partaker in their evil deeds.

Conclusion:
1. So, who is the antichrist?
   a. From a historical perspective (the exact person/people that John was talking about), it was a group of people (antichrists) during John’s time who claimed to be Christians but that taught that Jesus did not actually come in the flesh (which later ballooned into full-blown Gnosticism by the end of the first century).
   b. From a modern application perspective, antichrist (again, it means “one opposed to Christ”) can refer to anyone who is against Jesus Christ.
   i. This includes those who deny He ever existed.
   ii. This includes those who say Jesus was “just a good man” (because they are opposed to the idea that He was the Christ sent from God).
iii. This includes those who twist and pervert the Scriptures yet still claim to be Christians (remember the antichrists claimed to be Christians).

c. This applies to anyone and everyone who is opposed to Christ in actions or words.

2. Are YOU an antichrist?
   a. You may claim Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, but if you are not doing His will, you are not on His side!
      i. Jesus said if you are not with Him, you are against Him (Matthew 12:30).
      ii. Claiming Jesus is not enough, you must OBEY Him (Matthew 7:21).
      iii. Therefore, if you are not obeying Him, you are against Him, and you are antichrist!
   b. If you are not doing His will, you will find out at the judgment that Christ counted you as an adversary (Hebrews 10:27).

3. I plead with you to take an honest look at your life, your words, and your actions.
   a. Do they match up with what Jesus commanded?
   b. If not, you need to take care of that right now; don’t wait.

4. Invitation...