

# Psalm 10

## The Psalm of the Antichrist

September 24, 2023

### 1. Intro

- a. Around the year 90AD, the Apostle John wrote three short letters, known to us as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John
  - i. Go ahead and turn to the first of these letters, 1<sup>st</sup> John, and we'll look at chapter 2, verse 28
    1. You'll find first John at the very back of your Bible, as you get close to the book of Revelation
  - ii. John writes in 1 John 2:28
    1. *<sup>28</sup>And now, little children, abide in Christ, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.*
    2. Why would those who John addresses as his "little children" shrink from Jesus in shame at his return?
      - a. Isn't that what we as Christians long for?
      - b. Isn't the return of Jesus what we've set our hope upon?
        - i. Of course it is!!
    3. So what would cause the believers in Christ to be ashamed upon his return?
      - a. Well, in the context of this passage, John worries that the Christians will have cause for shame as they fall under the influence of the antichrists
        - i. Not just THE antichrist, but antichrists, PLURAL
  - iii. Look further up in verses 18-19... John writes,
    1. *<sup>18</sup>Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. <sup>19</sup>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 it might become plain that they all are not of us.*
      - a. Remember, John wrote this letter over 1900 years ago
        - i. So if John believed that he was living in the "last hour," how much more so should we have that same sense of urgency?
      - b. It's pretty obvious we're seeing the same things John saw, isn't it?
        - i. We live in an age of "deconstruction," where massive amounts of people are "going out from us," renouncing the faith that they once professed to have
      - c. But note how John describes the leaders in the church who depart from the faith
        - i. John says that when it is leaders of the church who abandon their faith in Christ, we ought to view them as a type of "antichrist," for they are opposed to the things of Jesus
          1. John writes in verse 26 that these antichrists will work to deceive the church
          2. And if we allow ourselves to be deceived by them, then we will shrink back in shame upon our Savior's return
  - iv. So why all this talk about antichrists on a day when we are supposed to be looking at Psalm 10, a Psalm of King David???
    1. Listen to what Martin Luther had to say about this Psalm,
      - a. "There is not, in my judgment, a Psalm which describes the mind, the manners, the works, the words, the feelings, and the fate of the ungodly with so much propriety, fulness, and light, as this Psalm."
    2. Augustine went as far as to say that this Psalm should be titled, "The Psalm of the Antichrist"
      - a. For it describes SO MANY of the different characteristics of those who would seek to deceive the saints
        - i. So let's turn to Psalm 10, and we will look at it together...

### b. Psalm 10

- i. *<sup>1</sup>Why, O LORD, do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? <sup>2</sup>In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor; let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised. <sup>3</sup>For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul, and the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the LORD.*

*<sup>4</sup>In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are, "There is no God." <sup>5</sup>His ways prosper at all times; your judgments are on high, out of his sight; as for all his foes, he puffs at them. <sup>6</sup>He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved; throughout all generations I shall not meet adversity." <sup>7</sup>His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and iniquity. <sup>8</sup>He sits in ambush in the villages; in hiding places he murders the innocent. His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless; <sup>9</sup>he lurks in ambush like a lion in his thicket; he lurks that he may seize the poor; he seizes the poor when he draws him into his net. <sup>10</sup>The helpless are crushed, sink down, and fall by his might. <sup>11</sup>He says in his heart, "God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it." <sup>12</sup>Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted. <sup>13</sup>Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"? <sup>14</sup>But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation, that you may take it into your hands; to you the helpless commits himself; you have been the helper of the fatherless. <sup>15</sup>Break the arm of the wicked and evildoer; call his wickedness to account till you find none. <sup>16</sup>The LORD is king forever and ever; the nations perish from his land. <sup>17</sup>O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear <sup>18</sup>to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.*

- c. If you'll remember from the introductory material from last week, Psalm 10 continues the acrostic structure from Psalm 9
    - i. There's no title that tells us that this Psalm is from David
      - 1. But the structure of it confirms that it is indeed a continuation of Psalm 9
        - a. While Psalm 9 was a Psalm of praise and thanksgiving, as David proclaimed the "wonderful works of God," Psalm 10 is more of a lament, as David questions why God is seemingly "far off" while the wicked prosper
      - 2. And in light of David's lament, and Augustine's declaration that this Psalm could be titled the Psalm of the Antichrist, we'll use this Psalm to walk through some of the different red flags we might encounter along our journey
  - d. Our main points for this sermon are as follows:
    - i. The practices of the antichrists
    - ii. The prayer of the saints
    - iii. The promises of the Lord
2. The practices of the antichrists
- a. Throughout the first 11 verses of this Psalm, we find David listing off the different attributes of the wicked
  - b. In verse 2, we see that, in their arrogance, the wicked "hotly pursue" the poor
    - i. This word used for "hotly pursue" means to pursue with a great passion, almost with a burning inside
      - 1. So how do the wicked pursue the poor with this kind of burning and intensity?
      - 2. Or, in the context of our main theme for this week, how do the antichrists hotly pursue the poor?
    - ii. In an article from the BBC in 2019, a man named Larry Fardette was interviewed in California
      - 1. Larry's daughter had been seriously ill
      - 2. His construction business was suffering
      - 3. And his work van had just broke down
        - a. But Larry had recently become a Christian, and he had started watching the televangelists on TV
          - i. One of these televangelists was a man named Todd Coontz, who encouraged his viewers to "sow a seed" of certain amounts, and God would multiply their riches according to their faith
        - b. Over the course of just a few years, Larry estimated that he had given Coontz and other televangelists over \$20,000
          - i. The article goes on to state that Larry and his wife continued to live just above the poverty level, while during the same time Coontz purchased a \$1.4 million condo in South Carolina
4. How are the antichrists of our day "hotly pursuing" the poor?

- a. They are doing it right in plain sight, as televangelists and preachers all over the world promote their Prosperity Gospel, promising their listeners – listeners that are mostly poor – that if they would just send in their money with enough faith, God would rain down His financial blessings upon them
          - i. My friends, this is a heresy that we must absolutely flee from
      - 5. There is NOTHING in the New Testament that promises the followers of Jesus that we will be rich and prosperous if we would just have enough faith in the promises of God
  - iii. In fact, the Scriptures tell us the exact OPPOSITE of these teachings
    - 1. 1 Peter 4:12-13 says,
      - a. *<sup>12</sup>Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup>But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.*
        - i. Don't be surprised, Christian, when you go through fiery trials
          - 1. REJOICE as you share in the sufferings of your Savior!
    - 2. 1 Corinthians 1:5-6 says,
      - a. *<sup>5</sup>For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. <sup>6</sup>If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer.*
        - i. Do you long to experience the abundant comfort of our Lord, Christian?
          - 1. Then patiently endure your suffering, for the comfort of Christ does not come without the suffering
    - 3. And Jesus himself said in Matthew 8:20,
      - a. *The "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."*
        - i. My friends, we serve a suffering Savior
        - ii. And if we are unwilling to follow in his footsteps, then we are unfit to be his disciples
    - 4. The antichrists of our day are hotly pursuing the poor by presenting to them a false gospel that says that Jesus just wants us all to be rich
      - a. If the poor would just sow their financial seeds with enough faith, they would experience the full blessings of the Lord
        - i. And countless thousands are falling into these schemes, each and every day
  - iv. Brothers and sisters in Christ, beware of those who are hotly pursuing the poor
- c. A second characteristic of these antichrists is that, according to Psalm 10:3, they boast of the desires of their soul, and in their greed, they curse and renounce the Lord
  - i. How do we see this manifested in our day today?
    - 1. We talked about it briefly last week, but this is the attitude of our day that says, "Just follow your heart"
      - a. It really doesn't matter what the Bible says – most of the commands found in the Scriptures are only relevant to the cultural context of those days long ago
        - i. What matters is what YOUR HEART says
          - 1. Or, in the language of Psalm 10, what matters is what the desires of your own soul are
  - ii. Occasionally I'll check out some different social media pages of people who I don't agree with theologically, just to see what things are being taught in various churches in our nation
    - 1. One guy that I've listened to a few times lately is Dr. Caleb Lines, who is the Senior Minister of University Christian Church in San Diego
      - a. In a video Dr. Lines put out on June 28<sup>th</sup> of this year, he says, and forgive my language here, "The doctrine of original sin is crap theology... Jesus knew nothing about the sin of Adam corrupting all of humanity. You are beautiful JUST AS YOU ARE, so just be YOU, and go out and make the world beautiful."

2. In other words, follow the desires of your soul
    - a. Follow the desires of your heart
  - iii. But there's a problem with that, isn't there?
    1. Jeremiah 10:9 says
      - a. <sup>9</sup>*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*
        - i. We know this is true from our own experience, don't we?
          1. How many times have we followed the desires of our heart and ended up getting into a whole mess of trouble?
            - a. Or is that just me?
    2. Thankfully, the Apostle Paul joins us in our wretched condition as he writes in Romans 7:18-19,
      - a. <sup>18</sup>*For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. <sup>19</sup>For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.*
        - i. That's Paul saying those words
        - ii. The guy that wrote a huge chunk of the Bible, and evangelized nearly every country in the Roman Empire
    3. My friends, if we simply seek to pursue the desire of our own souls, then we will ALWAYS choose to renounce the Lord
      - a. Even the Apostle Paul realized this truth about who we are
  - iv. As followers of Christ, the call is to DIE to the desires of our soul
    1. The call is to DIE to the longings and the passions and the wants of our hearts
      - a. That is the ONLY way we can truly be Jesus' disciples
    2. Anyone who comes along and tells you that it is OK to just be who YOU want to be, is walking in the spirit of the antichrist
      - a. And we must FLEE those who teach such things
- d. The third characteristic of these antichrists is, as David says in verse 4, in the pride of their face, they do not seek God
  - i. All their thoughts are, "There is no God."
    1. I would very humbly and very cautiously say that this is one of the biggest problems plaguing the Southern Baptist Convention in our day today...
  - ii. About a hundred and fifty years ago, the Southern Baptists were in trouble
    1. If you're not familiar with our history, the Southern Baptists were formed when the Northern Baptists said that they would not support any missionaries that also owned slaves
      - a. Many solid, but wrong, Baptists in the south owned slaves
        - i. And therefore, they split from their Northern brothers to form the Southern Baptist Convention
        - ii. This certainly isn't a proud moment in our history, but it is what it is
  - iii. After the Civil War, and after the practice of slavery was ended, the Southern Baptists had a problem
    1. Their churches were RAPIDLY declining in numbers, the South was becoming increasingly poor due to reconstruction, and their leaders went into panic mode
    2. So what did they do?
      - a. Many churches began to drift away from the Scriptures
      - b. Instead of preaching sound theology and doctrine, they instead watered down the Gospel, and told the people what they wanted to hear
        - i. They gave them skits and dramas
        - ii. They gave them social clubs
        - iii. They gave them fun and activities and entertainment
          1. In church-growth language, these churches chose to pursue pragmatism, doing whatever "works," rather than holding fast to the Word of God
    3. In the pride of their face, they came up with new strategies, new techniques, new methodologies to make the church more appealing to the world

- a. And although they would never come right out and say it verbally, their actions said very clearly, “There is no God. Therefore WE must figure out how to regrow our churches”
    - i. And this is where we are today
      - 1. Look around at the fastest growing churches in our area, and ask, “Are they strong on doctrine?”
        - a. “Are they strong on theology?”
      - 2. If you spend just a little bit of time digging around, you will see very quickly that, no, they are NOT strong on these things
        - a. But they sure are fun
  - 4. My friends, pragmatism is running rampant throughout our denomination today
    - a. And at the heart of this movement is the unspoken belief, “There is no God. Therefore WE must do whatever it takes to get people in the doors.”
  - 5. But doesn’t Acts 2:42-47 say that...
    - a. As the Christians devoted themselves to the Scriptures...
    - b. As they devoted themselves to fellowship...
    - c. As they devoted themselves to the Lord’s Supper and to prayer...
      - i. THEN the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved?
  - iv. When our leaders, in the pride of their face, come up with “better” methods than those listed in Acts chapter 2, then they have forgotten their God, and they are walking in the spirit of the Antichrist
- e. The fourth characteristic of these antichrists is that, according to Psalm 10:5-6, they pursue prosperity at all times, and they flee from adversity
- i. We don’t need to spend a whole lot of time on this one, as it falls very much in line with the prosperity preachers we addressed in the first characteristic, that they hotly pursue the poor
    - 1. How do these antichrists hotly pursue the poor?
      - a. By promising them financial riches
      - b. But ALSO by promising them a life full of prosperity, and a life free from adversity
    - 2. The poster-child for this kind of teaching is Joel Osteen
      - a. In 2019, Osteen’s fortune was estimated at around \$60 million
      - b. His 17,000 square foot mansion was listed at \$10.7 million
        - i. It includes parking for 20 cars, including his \$230,000 Ferrari
    - 3. How did Osteen amass such incredible wealth as a supposed pastor of a church?
      - a. By preaching a message of prosperity at all times
      - b. By preaching a message that tells the Christian it is OK to flee from adversity
      - c. By preaching that, if we would just have enough faith, we could be living our best life now
        - i. And his \$60 million net worth and his 17,000 square foot mansion tells us one unarguable fact: the masses LOVE his message
  - ii. But to be honest, Osteen is the easy target
    - 1. The reality is that this kind of false gospel is being proclaimed at an alarming number of churches, right in our own backyard
    - 2. This should not come as a surprise to us, my friends
      - a. The Apostle Paul wrote of these things to his young disciple Timothy, many centuries ago
      - b. In 2 Timothy 3:1-7, Paul wrote this warning,
        - i. <sup>1</sup>But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. <sup>2</sup>For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, <sup>4</sup>treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup>having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such

people. <sup>6</sup>For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, <sup>7</sup>always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

- iii. Brothers and sisters, it is not just weak women who are falling prey to these antichrists
    - 1. It is everyone who simply wants to chase after prosperity, and everyone who wants to flee from affliction
    - 2. We must beware of those who preach this false gospel
  - f. Verse 7 of Psalm 10 goes on to say that these antichrists are full of mischief and iniquity
    - i. And verse 8 tells us that they prey on the helpless
      - 1. We've already unpacked these things extensively this morning, so let's move on to the final characteristic of the wicked
  - g. As verse 13 tells us, the wicked renounce the judgment of God
    - i. Verse 13 says,
      - 1. <sup>13</sup>Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"?
    - ii. We spoke of this last week, so I don't want to spend a whole lot of time here, but this is essentially the "gospel" of Oprah, isn't it?
      - 1. All roads eventually lead to heaven, so just be a good person
        - a. We're all going to get to the same place at some point
          - i. There is no judgment
          - ii. God will not call us to account
          - iii. There is no hell
    - iii. There is another guy I follow on social media, someone I actually went to college with, and was in a discipleship group with for a short season
      - 1. This guy was in the right crowd, he sang in a popular Christian band on campus, and he was well-liked by many
        - a. But, somewhere along the road, he started listening to teachers who taught against the doctrine of God's wrath
        - b. He started listening to those who taught against the doctrine of hell
        - c. And today, he has a very substantial following on social media, as he proclaims to all his followers that there is no hell
          - i. There is no judgment
          - ii. God will not call any of us to account
            - 1. It has been a tragic thing to witness his fall
      - 2. But the Apostle John would say, without apology, he went out from us, for he was NOT of us
    - iv. We must beware of those who proclaim that there will be no judgment in the end
  - h. So what are we to do with all of this?
    - i. This hasn't been a very uplifting message, has it?
    - ii. Trust me, I understand that!!
      - 1. But I also am comforted by the fact that, as we talked about in our Wednesday night study a couple of weeks ago, Paul was not hesitant to speak OFTEN about the enemies of the cross of Christ
        - a. For it is CRUCIAL that we not be deceived by their wicked and prideful ways
    - iii. So again, what do we do in light of all of these sobering realities?
      - 1. We go to the Lord in prayer!
3. The second of our main points is this: the prayer of the saints
- a. And in this Psalm, David's prayer is highlighted in one simple verse... verse 12 says,
    - i. <sup>12</sup>Arise O Lord; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted
      - 1. My friends, this must be our response as well
        - a. As the number of false teachers rises
        - b. As the number of antichrists, those who are enemies of the cross of Christ, increases at an alarming level
          - i. We are NOT to throw our hands up in frustration
          - ii. We are NOT to give up as if the situation is hopeless

- iii. We are NOT to throw in the towel and go live out in the desert as a bunch of hermits
    - iv. Nor are we to give into their teachings
      - 1. Believing that the Lord just wants us to be healthy and wealthy and prosperous
      - 2. Believing that the Lord just wants us to follow our heart
      - 3. Believing that the Lord has departed from his church, and therefore WE need to take things into our own hands
    - c. No, we must take these things to the Lord in prayer, as we say, “Arise O lord; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted”
  - 2. And the overwhelming response of the Scriptures is that the Lord will do JUST THAT!!
- 4. As we close this morning, and we look at the promises of the Lord found in Psalm 10, I want to switch the last five verses of Psalm 10 from 2<sup>nd</sup> person to 1<sup>st</sup> person
  - a. If we truly believe that the Holy Spirit inspired David’s words in this Psalm, then we can view these statements from David as statements from God Himself
    - i. And so we can read, starting in verse 14
      - 1. “But I DO see, for I note mischief and vexation, that I may take it into MY hands. To ME the helpless commits himself; I have been the helper of the fatherless. I WILL break the arm of the wicked and the evildoer; I WILL call his wickedness to account until I find none. I am King forever and ever; the nations will perish from MY land. I hear the desire of the afflicted. I will strengthen their heart. I will incline MY ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.”
  - b. My friends, nearly two millennia ago, the Apostle John warned his “little children” in the faith that there would be MANY antichrists who would go out from them, seeking to deceive them away from Christ
    - i. Nothing has changed
    - ii. And nothing will change
      - 1. This is exactly what Jesus prophesied would happen in Matthew 24:4-5, when he said,
        - a. <sup>4</sup>See that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup>For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray.
      - 2. And in verse 11,
        - a. <sup>11</sup>And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.
- iii. So what do we do in the midst of all these false prophets and antichrists?
  - 1. We pray to the God who will not forget the afflicted
    - a. And we trust in the simple truths of the Gospel by which we were saved
    - b. For as John wrote in 1 John 2:24-25,
      - i. <sup>24</sup>Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. <sup>25</sup>And this is the promise that he made to use—eternal life.
  - 2. My friends, if you are in Christ, you have no need for all the shiny things that these antichrists promise
    - a. For you have been given a promise that FAR EXCEEDS anything they have to offer
      - i. The promise of ETERNAL LIFE!!