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# The Three Battlegrounds by Francis Frangipane

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## Chapter 16 - Exposing the Spirit of Antichrist! (Part 1)

*There is an order of beings whose iron fist rules the empire of hell; their cloud of evil darkens nearly every facet of life on earth. To topple this wicked kingdom and prevail victoriously in our warfare, we must discern our enemies and set to flight these commanders of darkness.*

### More Than Just a Man

There exists a ruler of darkness, a principality of the deadliest order, that has been tolerated by believers for so long that its influence is considered normal for the church. This diabolical entity is the spirit of antichrist. While this spirit manifests itself wherever true Christianity is openly persecuted, it is a demon whose nature is primarily religious. This spirit stands firmly in opposition against the unfolding restoration of the church of Jesus Christ.

As this demon's name is, so is he. He is simply "anti" or against Christ. He manifests empty religion as truth instead of the actual life of Christ Himself. This principality uses the power-demons of jealousy, fear, unforgiveness and ambition - whatever is necessary to keep independent, local churches from becoming the "armed and dangerous," united body of Christ.

It is easy to lock our interpretation of the antichrist into a particular personage who will be revealed just prior to Christ's return. Indeed, most Christians are in agreement that such a man will ultimately emerge. This individual "opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). But, if this is the antichrist in his human, manifested form, then this also describes the nature or essence of the antichrist spirit in its invisible form.

This spirit of antichrist has been prevalent in the church since the first century. In fact, the apostle John plainly states that there were "many antichrists" in the first century. He wrote, "Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared" (1 John 2:18). When we compare this verse with 2 Thessalonians 2:4, we see that our understanding of the term "antichrist" has been too narrow when limited to one man in the future. John said, "even now many antichrists have appeared."



It is important to grasp that John is actually speaking of people who once seemed to be members of the united, citywide Christian community. The apostle tells us that “they went out from us.” He said, “if they had been of us, they would have remained with us” (1 John 2:19).

What motivated these misled souls? Later in John’s epistle, the apostle reveals it was the antichrist spirit. He wrote in chapter four, “Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world” (1 John 4:3). John makes a distinct reference here to the spirit of antichrist, which he stated was already in the world.