872 1 JOHN, II.   
   
 AUTHORIZED VERSION REVISED. !AUTHORIZED VERSION.   
   
 many antichrists; from whence we|0w christs ; are many know   
 im. iv. KI ay i is the last time. \that it is the last time.   
 »itimiva, know that it   
   
 recorded for us; but what is their plain arisen many antichrists (what are we to   
 and unmistakable import, will only then understand the Apostle as saying ? Is this   
 be known, when it becomes necessary for fact alleged as a presumption that the   
 the churches to see clearly the signs of Antichrist is near, these many antichrists   
 His coming): and even as ye heard (in prefigaring and heralding him,—or as a   
 ‘our preaching when ye received the Gos- proof that he is come, being in fact the   
 pel) that antichrist cometh (the present aggregate of these? ‘The question is an   
 tense of ordained fixity: “is to come.” important one, as affecting that of a per-   
 But who, and what, is Antichrist? As sonal or collective antichrist, And the   
 far as the meaning of the word is con- first thing to be noticed in answering it is,   
 cerned, it anay mean, either 1) one who that these many antichrists are explained   
 stands agains¢ Christ, or 2) one who stands by the Apostle himself, ver. 22, f., to be   
 iastead of Christ. The latter meaning is deniers of the Father and the Son: i. e.   
 strenuously maintained here hy Grotius, the Son: and even more explicitly, ch.   
 who holds that our Antichrist here has 8, deniers that Jesus Christ is come in the   
 nothing to do with the adversary (anti- flesh. Here, however, this latter point is   
 keimenos) of St. Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 8: that not yet brought out: here it is as liars   
 being one who professes himeelf an enemy that we hear of them: as deniers of the   
 to God, whereas this is one who makes truth, which Truth is Jesus Christ, the   
 himself Christ : understanding this and Son of God: as not having the Spiri   
 what follows [see above} of the false which is truth and no lie, ver. 27. They   
 Christs prophesied of by our Lord, Matt. are said to have gone forth from the   
 xxiv, 5, 24. This he defends by analogy Christian church, but not to have been   
 of words similarly compounded with anti: of us, as their spirit is not of God, ch. i   
 which fnrnishes many examples of this 3. They are antichrists ; their spirit is   
 sense of substitution for another. But, the spirit of antichrist, ch. iv. 3, of   
 seeing that the other meaning, the adver- the readers had heard that it should come,   
 sary of Christ, is also upheld by abundant and it was in the world already. From   
 precedents of the same kiud,—it is clear much of this it might at first sight appear   
 that we cannot solve the doubt by philo- as if these antichrists in their aggregate   
 logy alone, but must take into account formed the Antichrist. But a nearer in-   
 other considerations, And first- among spection will convince us that this eannot   
 these comes the fact, that St. John, who be so, [Zhe] Christ and [the] Antichrist   
 was acquainted with the form pseudo- stand over against one another, and anal   
 christ, using as he does pseudo-prophet, requires that if the one be personal, the   
 eh. iv. 1, never uses it, but always,—ch. other should be also. And in ch. iv. 3 we   
 iv, 3, 2 John 7,—this word Antichrist. Is ‘are not told that merely the spirit is of   
 it not hence probable that he intended to ‘Antichrist, but [in the original] that it is   
 signify, not a false Christ, but an anti- of the Antichrist, the personal reference   
 christ? Next, we may fairly allege the being still Again, we have “cometh,”   
 ancient interpretations, as shewing how the present future of prophetic fixity, in   
 Greeks themselves understood the word. both places, here and in ch. iv. 3, set   
 In these we do not find a vestige of the against “there have arisen” and “it is :”   
 meaning “a substitute for Christ” be- and the verb itself, its prophetic sense,   
 ing attached to the term, but every where one regularly used of Christ, as here of   
 they interpret Antichrist by an enemy to antichrist. So that our only refuge in   
 Christ, Taking then Antichrist for order to consistent interpretation here, is   
 Christ’s adversary, I would refer to the to regard these many Antichrists, clothed   
 disquisition and summary of opinions in with the attributes and having the spirit   
 the Introduction on 2 Thess. ii, #,, where of the Antichrist, as being bis forerunners   
 the reasons which have induced me to in the sense of 2 Thess. ii, 7, “for the   
 expect a personal Antichrist are given in mystery of iniquity already worketh:”   
 full: as are also the indications furnished meaning, as I have explained at length in   
 by propheey, and by the history of the the summary referred to above, that the   
 chureh and the world, as to his probable antichristian principle was then, as it is