

## CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

## WHO IS ANTICHRIST ?

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[The thoughts following, being an extract from a Synod sermon, demand our attention as the *last printed utterance* of a man, (the late Dr. Taylor of Montreal) who lived in active work for a great many years in a city which claims to be the *Rome* of Popery on this Continent, and who therefore *knew wherof he affirmed* when he asserted that the Pope is Antichrist.—Ed. C. C. M.]

2 Thess. ii. 4.—Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

This is a very remarkable prediction. It has attracted the notice of the students of Scripture from the earliest times down to the present day. To enumerate the books that have been written, and give even an outline of the various theories of interpretation that have been put forth, would itself form a large volume. Those interpreters, that have any right to be regarded as Evangelical, have been generally of the opinion that it is Antichrist that is here spoken of under the names of "the man of sin," and the "son of perdition;" but who Antichrist is, or where he is to make his appearance, or what are his characteristics? I put it to yourself, or to the judgment of any candid man, whether there is any other personage to whom these characters can possibly apply, except the Popes of Rome, as the Head and Representative of the Roman Church. I may possibly be reminded of the Pagan Roman Emperors, whose claims were almost equally blasphemous. And I admit that many of the early Fathers believed that the Apostle did refer, in this passage, to the Emperor Nero, whose wickedness was so enormous; and, when Nero died without fulfilling their expectations, they supposed he would rise again from the dead, and appear in the true character of Anti-

christ. But there are these two fatal objections to the opinion that this personage is to be found in any Roman Emperor: First, that none of them ever sat in *the temple of God*. And second, that, whereas it is evident from the context in this chapter that the Apostle is speaking of some one who had not made his appearance at the time of writing, but was still future; the outrageous claims of the Roman Emperors were matters of history long before his day. We think it not improbable, however, that in drawing this picture, he had these Emperors in his eye; perhaps, they suggested some of the traits; perhaps, it was his design to teach that Antichrist would resemble them—would have some connexion with them—would, in fact, be their successor. But with the exception of these Emperors, let me ask you to cast your eye back over the whole compass of history, sacred or profane, and tell me if you can find a single personage, to whom even the half of these characteristics are so applicable, as the whole of them are to the Head of the Roman Church?

First Identification: Antichrist is the opponent of Christ; so are the Popes of Rome in their office as the Heads of the Papal system. For that system deprives Christ of the place of honour and authority which belongs to him as sole King and Redeemer. It opposes him in all his offices, of prophet, priest and king. It suppresses the word of Christ, or even commands it to be cast into the flames, and never allows it to have any other meaning than the Pope is pleased to assign to it. Christ claims to be the only Mediator between God and men, but the Church of Rome declares that there are many other mediators, and, in point of practice, makes less use of