

The Nature of Heresy

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: I John 2:18-19.

B. Our age has become an age of tolerance where belief has been discounted, but belief is important because action flows from it.

II. How to recognize heresy when you hear it.

A. Characteristics of heresy.

1. It always makes its appearance within certain cycles that mark the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

a. No one knows the timing of Jesus' return except the Father. (Matthew 24)

b. John does not refer to *the* last hour—he refers to *a* last hour.

c. There are times of stress that come in cycles—these are last hour outbreaks.

d. All of these uprising of heresy are last hours.

2. Heresies all begin within the Christian family. (Acts 20)

3. Heresies adopt Christian terminology such as resurrection, evangelism and prayer.

4. These things will break away from New Testament Christianity and insist that they are the truth.

B. The Word of God can bring people back into line with the truth of God.

Application questions:

1. Which characteristic of heresy stood out to you? Why?

2. What modern heresies have challenged Christianity in your community?

3. How would you respond to someone from trying to convert you to a heresy? Explain.
