



THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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The Beginning of the End

SERMON REFERENCE: 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1990

Jesus Christ could come again at any moment. The stage is set, and the curtain is ready to be drawn back on the drama of the ages. Things are about to unfold, and we are living in the beginning of the end.

2 Thessalonians reveals three tremendous truths about the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“And to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels...” (2 Thessalonians 1:7).

First, we need not be disturbed.

Jesus is on His way, and when He comes again, His glory will be revealed. Though we don't know the exact time or day, we know He will return exactly on time.

“When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day” (2 Thessalonians 1:10).

We will be witnesses of His transforming love, amazing grace, and steadfast power; our testimonies will be what brings others to wonder at Him as well.

Secondly, we need not be deceived.

Many false prophets will come, specifically the Antichrist. 2 Thessalonians 2:3 states: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed...”

Adrian Rogers says, “Our trouble began with the sin of man; it will climax with the man of sin.” There's something very sinister already at work in our world today, called the mystery of iniquity. Once the Church is raptured, there will be nothing to restrain iniquity, and the devil's evil power will be unleashed.

Finally, we need not be disappointed.

Jesus will come secretly for His Church, then sovereignly to rule and reign. 2 Thessalonians 2:8 reveals, “Then shall that wicked be revealed, who the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth.”

Jesus, who came first to seek and to save, will return with judgment. He came first in mercy; He will return in flaming fire, to take vengeance. He came first in humility; He will return in incredible power. We will not be disappointed if we've placed our faith in Him.

Life Application

As we anticipate Jesus' return, continue praying for our world and for the lost. Share the Gospel at every opportunity, and live unshaken in this shaky world.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The stage is set for the drama of the ages.
- b) The curtain is about to be pulled back on the end times.
- c) The drama is not fiction.
- d) Today's message will highlight three tremendous truths concerning the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2) WE NEED NOT BE DISTURBED

- a) 2 Thessalonians 1:7
 - i) We do not need to go around with headline hysteria.
- b) Three categories of people in the world today:
 - i) Those who are afraid.
 - ii) Those who do not know enough to be afraid.
 - iii) Those who know their Bibles.
 - (1) The message today will deal with this third group.
- c) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
 - i) The hope of this world is not politics, not government, not science, nor is it education.
 - ii) The only hope for this world is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
- d) The Who of His coming:
 - i) The Lord Jesus is coming.
 - ii) Today, His Lordship is being covered, veiled and ignored.
 - (1) He came the first time as a lowly Nazarene; He is coming the second time as King of kings and Lord of lords.
 - (2) According to this passage in 2 Thessalonians, He will be glorified and admired in His saints.
 - (a) When He came the first time, He was ridiculed and spit upon.
 - iii) His Second Coming will be stark terror for His enemies; but a joyful thing for the sons and daughters of God.
 - (1) Revelation 22:20
- e) The when of His coming:
 - i) 2 Thessalonians 1:7
 - ii) The Second Coming is not a matter of "if" but "when."
 - iii) Though we do not know the day nor the hour when Jesus Christ will return, we do know that He is coming on time.
 - (1) Galatians 4:4
 - (a) Jesus was not one second ahead of time nor one second late.
 - iv) Malachi calls the Second Coming of Jesus Christ a sunrise.
 - (1) Malachi 4:2
 - (a) Just as we can't hurry up a sunrise nor stop a sunrise, neither can we hurry up nor stop the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
 - (i) One day Jesus is going to come.
- f) The wonder of His coming:
 - i) 2 Thessalonians 1:10



- (1) In the Greek, the word “glorified” in this passage has the idea of wonder, of awe.
- ii) We will wonder at His transforming love.
 - (1) We will see in an instant, in a moment, all of the saints made like the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (2) He is Prophet, Priest, and King; we will be prophet, priest, and king.
 - (3) He is perfect; we will be made perfect.
 - (4) Not one bit of sin will be left in those of us who have been saved through His blood and sacrifice.
 - (5) We will be made in the likeness of our Lord.
- iii) We will wonder at His saving grace.
 - (1) 2 Thessalonians 1:10
 - (2) It is only through His saving grace that we will be caught up in the rapture and transformed into His likeness and enjoy eternity with Him in Heaven.
- iv) We will wonder at His keeping power.
 - (1) 2 Thessalonians 1:10
 - (a) Not one of His children will be lost.
 - (b) When the Lord Jesus Christ saves us, He keeps us.
 - (2) It is the glory of our Shepherd that not one of His sheep is lost.
 - (a) John 10:29
- g) The witness of His coming:
 - i) 2 Thessalonians 1:10
 - ii) Paul was continually witnessing, telling others about His coming.
 - (1) It was the keynote, along with the cross, of the Paul’s preaching that the One who came is coming again.
 - iii) If we believe He is coming again, we should be telling others.
 - (1) The mark of whether or not we truly believe is that we get it in our hearts and become a soul-winner.
- h) Rather than worrying and wondering what the world is coming to, we need to rest in Who is coming to the world.

3) WE SHOULD NOT BE DECEIVED

- a) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3
 - i) In this passage, Paul addressed a forged letter that someone had signed Paul’s name to it and had said in effect that the rapture had already taken place and they were now in The Day of the Lord.
 - (1) “The Day of the Lord” means “the tribulation.”
 - (2) These saints were shaken and troubled thinking that they had missed the rapture.
 - (3) Just as in Paul’s day, there are many today who try to deceive others.
 - (4) Paul tells the people what to look for with the Second Coming and reassures the saints to not be troubled and not to be deceived.
- b) 2 Thessalonians 2:3-5
 - i) Paul shares about the coming antichrist.
 - (1) The one called: the beast, the man of sin, the wicked one, the son of perdition, which means that judgment is coming for him.
 - (2) He explains that there must first come a falling away, or an apostasy, before the Second Coming.
 - (3) Paul then says that the antichrist will come.
 - (a) The antichrist is called the man of sin.



- (i) This man will be the epitome of evil.
- (ii) In different Bible translations, the phrase “man of sin” is called “the man of lawlessness,” “the incarnation of wickedness,” or “wickedness in human form.”
- (iii) There is coming upon this Earth a creature, a man, who will be the devil wearing human clothes.
- (b) The antichrist is also called the son of perdition, meaning that judgment is coming for him
- (c) Revelation 13
- (d) “Anti” means “against” and “instead of.”
 - (i) He is one who is coming against Christ.
 - (ii) He is coming as one who comes instead of Christ.
- (e) The antichrist will be a counterfeit Christ.
- (f) John 14:9
 - (i) Jesus said that those who had seen Him had also seen the Father.
 - (ii) When the antichrist comes, he too can say that those who see him, have also seen his father, the devil.
 - 1. He will be the devil incarnate.
- (4) 2 Thessalonians 2:4
 - (a) The antichrist will oppose God and exalt himself above God.
 - (b) The devil’s ambition is to be worshipped.
 - (i) Isaiah 14:14
 - (c) This passage states that the devil will sit in the temple of God.
 - (i) That means that the temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt.
 - (d) Zechariah 12:3
- (5) 2 Thessalonians 2:3
 - (a) The word “revealed” here literally means that the antichrist is going to be unveiled, exposed, uncovered.
 - (b) If the rapture is very near, then that means that the antichrist is alive and well on planet Earth right now.
- (6) 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7
 - (a) Paul makes it clear that the spirit of the antichrist is in our world today.
 - (b) “To let” means “to restrain.”
 - (c) Paul tells us that there is a spirit in the world today called the mystery of iniquity.
 - (i) Wickedness has always been working on the Earth.
 - 1. We face organized, brilliant, invisible, tireless demon spirits called the mystery of iniquity.
 - (d) That evil is being restrained at this moment by the Holy Spirit.
 - (i) Satan is on a leash.
 - 1. He is not able to do everything that he wants to do, would do, could do, and will do one day.
 - 2. He cannot yet have his way.
 - (ii) The Holy Spirit has a ministry to help the saints as well as to hinder Satan.
 - (iii) When the Rapture takes place and we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the Holy Spirit who lives in us will also be taken out of the way.
 - 1. The church right now, filled with the Holy Spirit, is standing in Satan’s way.
 - a. 2 Thessalonians 2:7
 - b. The devil would love to see the believers of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit taken out of the way because they are a hindrance to him.



- 2. When the church is removed, evil will engulf the world.
 - a. The church is salt and light.
 - i. Matthew 5:13-16
 - ii. Salt purifies and preserves, but it also stings and irritates.
 - iii. When the salt is taken out, then the putrification will begin.
 - iv. When the light is taken out, then darkness will engulf the globe.
 - 3. Once the church is removed, the Great Tribulation will begin.
- (7) We are not in the Great Tribulation yet.
 - (a) The tribulation takes place after the rapture of the church.
 - (b) This is when the man of sin will be revealed; the antichrist.
 - (c) We should praise God for the Holy Spirit.
- (8) The antichrist will be the devil incarnate.
 - (a) His intellectual genius will be great.
 - (b) His authority will be overpowering.
 - (c) His hatreds will be extraordinary.
 - (d) His techniques will be superb.
 - (e) Men will be willing to die for him.
 - (f) Women will swoon at his feet.
 - (g) Children will sing his praises.
 - (h) He will come as a great world leader.
- c) The Great Tribulation will be a time of torture and terror, and there will be no escape.
 - i) Those who do not receive the Lord Jesus in this day and age, will believe the lies of the antichrist.
 - ii) 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

4) WE WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED

- a) 2 Thessalonians 2:8
 - i) This passage speaks of the Battle of Armageddon.
 - (1) "Wicked" is capitalized because it refers to a person.
 - (2) The battle will be fought and won with a word that comes from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) Two aspects of the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
 - i) The Second Coming does not refer so much to a punctiliar period in time as much as it is a series of events.
 - ii) He is coming for His bride; the church.
 - (1) This coming is going to be sweet and secret.
 - (a) 2 Thessalonians 2:1
 - (b) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
 - (2) In this coming, Jesus Christ is coming sweetly as a bridegroom.
 - iii) He is coming with His bride.
 - (1) After the tribulation, He is coming back to the Earth to rule and reign with His bride.
 - (a) He is coming back in glory and power.
 - (2) In this coming, He is coming back sovereignly as King.
- c) The Lord Jesus will destroy the Antichrist.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) When Jesus came the first time, He suffered in shame.
 - i) When Jesus comes again, He is coming to reign in glory.



- b) When Jesus came the first time, they crowned Him with thorns.
 - i) When He comes again, He will wear a crown of glory.
- c) When He came the first time, He came to die in the sinners place.
 - i) When He comes again, He will execute judgment on the unsaved.
 - (1) He is both Savior and Judge.
 - (a) John 5:22
- d) When Jesus came the first time, He came to seek and to save that which is lost.
 - i) Luke 19:10
 - ii) When He comes again, He is coming to take vengeance on those who do not obey God.
- e) When Jesus came the first time, He came in humility.
 - i) When He comes again, He is coming in power and glory.
- f) When Jesus came the first time, He was rejected of men.
 - i) When He comes again, every knee shall bow, even the knee of the unbeliever.
- g) Three lessons from this passage:
 - i) We need not be disturbed.
 - ii) We must not be deceived.
 - iii) We will not be disappointed.
 - (1) Jesus Christ who came the first time is coming again.
 - (a) Acts 1:11
- h) These are not days to let up, shut up or back up until we are taken up.
 - i) We should strive to go out as a growing Christian.
 - (1) To be a better Christian tomorrow than we are today.
 - ii) Even in the last days, we should be growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iii) Philippians 3:14
 - iv) Psalm 17:15
- i) The intercession factor.
 - i) If we believe that Jesus Christ is coming again, we should be interceding in prayer for unsaved loved ones.
- j) The soul-winning factor.
 - i) If we believe that Jesus Christ is coming again, we should be telling others about Him.
- k) The preparation factor.
 - i) If we believe that Jesus Christ is coming again, we should be instilling Bible truths into our children.
- l) The comfort factor.
 - i) If we believe that Jesus Christ is coming again, we should be able to thank God and say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."
- m) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- n) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Find in God's Word Second Thessalonians chapter 1 beginning in verse 7. Second Thessalonians chapter 1, and in a moment we begin reading in verse 7. We're thinking about the beginning of the end. The stage is set for the drama of the ages, and the curtain is about to be pulled back on the end times. I say the drama, but what I'm talking about, precious friend, is not fiction. Today there are three tremendous truths that I want to lay on your heart concerning the coming of our Lord.

Truth number one, listen to me; **you need not be disturbed**. Now listen, you need not be disturbed. Look if you will in verse 7, "And to you who are troubled rest with us." You don't have to go around with headline hysteria. There are three categories of people in the world today: those who are afraid, those who don't know enough to be afraid, and those who know their Bibles. Now I'm going to talk to you about that third group. "You who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day."

Now ladies and gentlemen, the words that I've just read to you are packed with incredible truth! What is the hope of this world? It is not politics, not government, not science, not education. I say clearly, without stutter, without stammer, without apology, after having thought about it, knowing it from my heart, the only hope for this world is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The only hope for this world is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. You say, "Well, Pastor, everything is getting dark." Yes! It is getting gloriously dark. "To those who are troubled rest with us." "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven."

Think of **the Who of His coming**. The Lord Jesus is coming. What a day that will be when Jesus is revealed as the Lord of lords and King of kings. Today His lordship is being covered. Today His lordship is being veiled. Today His lordship is being ignored. He came the first time, He came as a lowly Nazarene walking by the shores of Galilee in sandaled feet. When He comes again, He's coming as King of kings. He's coming as Lord of lords. He's coming, according to this passage, to be glorified and admired in His saints. The One who was despised, the One who was ridiculed, the One who was spit upon, the One who was crowned with thorns, the One who was nailed to that hellish tree; crucified and buried. That One, Jesus, is coming again. Now that will be stark terror for His enemies, but what glory, what joy that will be for the children, the sons and daughters of God. And all of God's saints through the ages, when they think about the Second Coming of Jesus, they just say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20. The Who of His coming is Jesus.

The when of His coming. Look again in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 7, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven." Look at the word when. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed." Now it doesn't say if. The Second Coming is not a matter of if, but when. Well, when is He coming? Well I'll tell you this much, He is coming on time. The Bible says in Galatians 4:4, "He came the first time in the fullness of time." He was not one second ahead of time, not one second late. And when He



comes again, He will come on time. Malachi calls the Second Coming of Jesus a sunrise. Malachi 4 verse 2, "Unto you that fear My name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." Now let me tell you this about the sunrise. Friend, you can't hurry it up, and you can't stop it. Is that not true? Now that's the way the Second Coming of Jesus is. We can't hurry it up, and we cannot stop it. But one day Jesus is going to come. He's going to pull back the shades of night, pin them with a star, open the door of the morning, and flood the world with the light of His glorious Second Coming. Some golden daybreak, Jesus will come.

The Who of His coming: the Lord Jesus. The when of His coming: He's coming right on time. And then think of **the wonder of His coming**. Look in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints." Look at the word glorified. Actually the word there is admired, it literally in the Greek language has the idea of wonder, of awe. What are we going to wonder when we see the Lord Jesus? How will we be so wonderfully awestruck and admired when Jesus comes? You think what we're going to see. We're going to **wonder at His transforming love**. When we see all of us and all of the saints of the ages in a moment made like the Lord Jesus Christ. Some who've been stubborn and God-haters were conquered by His sovereign love. We're going to see some who were ignorant and blind, who had their eyes opened to the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We're going to see some who were demonized by sex and drugs and liquor, who've been made pure. We're going to see all of the saints of God rise in glorified bodies like His glorified body. Is He prophet, priest, and king? We will be prophet, priest, and king. Is He perfect? We will be perfect. How we will wonder when we will see the Lord Jesus Christ. Not one vestige of sin will be left in me. I can hardly wait for the day when I am made in the likeness of my blessed Lord.

But not only am I going to wonder at His transforming love, friend, I'm going to **wonder at His saving grace**. Look again in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints," we'll all be saints, "and to be admired in all them that believe." What enables us to be caught up in the rapture like this? What enables us to be transformed like this? Not of good that we have done, but because we have believed on Him. The Bible says it clearly, plainly, sweetly, sublimely in Acts 16:31, "Believe, believe, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." His transforming love; that will cause us to admire Him. His saving grace; that will cause us to admire the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then **His keeping power**. Look again in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10. The Bible says, "In all them that believe." Now think about that; all. Not one will be lost. Not a little child will be lost. Not a mighty man will be lost. When the Lord Jesus Christ saves us, friend, He keeps us. It is the glory of our Shepherd that not one of His sheep is lost. Jesus said in John 10:29, "My Father gave them Me, My Father, which is greater than all. No man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." And so, friend, what a wonderful, wonderful time this will be when the Lord Jesus comes again.

And then, think not only of the wonder of His coming, but think of **the witness of His coming**. Look again, if you will, in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10. He says this, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, to be admired in them that believe," now watch this, "because our testimony among you was believed in that day." Paul was witnessing of His coming. Paul was telling people, "Look, the One who came is coming again." And they believed it. And now they're caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air. The witness of His coming; Paul was constantly witnessing the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It was the keynote along with the cross, of the apostles' preaching, that the One who came is coming again. And Paul said, "Our testimony was believed among you." Do you believe it? I hope you believe it, because if you believe it, you're going to be telling others about it.



Now listen, folks, I'm going to be preaching on prophecy for four weeks, but the mark as to whether or not you believe what I preach is not whether you get it in your notebooks but whether you get it in your heart and in your feet and in your mouth, and you become a soul-winner. The apostle Paul said, "Our testimony among you was believed." And that's the reason you're going to be, in this crowd, made like the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know what will be joy for me when I get to Heaven? To see people that I've had the joy of introducing to Jesus Christ. I don't want to go to Heaven without taking some souls with me. "Must I go in empty-handed? Must I meet my Savior so? Without one soul with which to greet Him, must I empty-handed go?"

Now you take an individual. Maybe you sit by them on a bus. Maybe you see them on a ballfield. Maybe they are with you in school. Maybe they're a clerk that works alongside of you in the office. And you look at that individual and they seem plain, common, ordinary, insignificant. But, friend, wait until Jesus comes. Wait until you see that person that you've led to Christ transformed into His likeness. Wait until you see that person sparkling like a jewel in the crown of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then you'll say, "It was worth it all to win a soul to the Lord Jesus Christ."

And so, what is Paul talking about when he says, "Just rest. Rest with us." He talks about the Who of His coming, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed. He talks about the when of His coming, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed. He talks about the wonder of His coming. He's coming to be admired in all them that believe. And then he talks about **the witness of His coming**. He says, "Our testimony among you was believed in that day." So he's just saying, "Hey, folks, if you're saved, don't get blown out of the water by reading the newspapers and talking about all of the things that are happening on the earth." And rather than saying, "What's the world coming to?" You need to start saying, "Look Who's coming to the world. His name is Jesus."

Now here's something else that the apostle Paul tells, and I said there were three tremendous truths in this passage. Number one, you need not be disturbed. Number two, **you should not be deceived**. Now, go on to Second Thessalonians chapter 2 and look if you will in verses 1 through 3, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means." Now what had happened in this church was there was a devilish deception. Somebody had written a forged letter, a bogus letter, had signed the Apostle Paul's name to it, and had said in effect that the rapture had already taken place, that they were now in the day of the Lord. The day of the Lord means the tribulation, that the day of the Lord is at hand. And these saints who were suffering thought, "Oh, we have missed the rapture. Jesus has come, and we're not a part of it!" And they were shaken. They were troubled, and the apostle Paul takes the occasion of this devilish lie to tell the truth. He says, "Now don't be deceived. Let no man deceive you." There are a lot of quacks, there a lot of charlatans, there a lot of self-styled cult leaders who are deceiving so many in this day and in this age, and that's the reason we're having to study on Bible prophecy. You need not be disturbed. He says, "Rest with us. Don't be troubled. Don't be shaken." And he says, "You must not, you should not be deceived."

And then he begins to tell us what will happen so we can know what will happen, and he then tells us what to look for. He says in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 3 through 5, "Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day," that is, the day of the Lord, "shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called



God, or that is worshiped: so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things.”

Now what he begins to talk about now is the coming antichrist. He's called the beast. He's called the man of sin. He's called the wicked one. He is called here, the son of perdition; that means, judgment is coming for him. And the apostle Paul says that in order for us to have the day of the Lord, there has to come, first of all, a falling away, an apostasy. And then he says there must come the antichrist, this beast, this man of sin. Now he's called here the man of sin. Look at it if you will in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 3, “Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed.”

Now there's a man who is going to be so sinful that the Bible calls him, “The man of sin,” and we see how far the human race has come. It began with the sin of man. It ends up with the man of sin. He, this man will be the epitome of evil. I looked up this phrase, man of sin, in different Bible translations. Some give it, “The man of lawlessness.” Others give it, “The incarnation of wickedness.” Others give it, “The champion of wickedness.” Others give it, “Wickedness in human form.” There is coming upon this earth a creature, a man, who will be the devil wearing human clothes. He is called in Revelation chapter 13 verse 1, “The beast.” And next Sunday I'm going to be speaking on this subject, The Nature of the Beast. He is called also in the Bible, in First John 2:18, “The antichrist.” Anti means against, and it also means instead of. So he is one who is coming against Christ, and he is coming as one who comes instead of Christ. He is a counterfeit Christ.

Now, in John 14:9, Jesus said of His Father when Jesus was here on the earth, “He that hath seen the Father hath seen Me.” When the beast comes, the antichrist comes, the son of perdition, the man of sin comes, he could equally say, “He who hath seen me hath seen my father,” because he will be the devil incarnate. And what is he going to do? Well, look if you will in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 4. He, “Opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Now it's always been the devil's burning ambition to be worshiped. Satan said in Isaiah chapter 14 and verse 14, “I will be like the Most High God.” Satan wants to receive worship. We're going to see that as we study next week on this message, The Nature of the Beast. But he opposes God and he exalts himself above all that is called God, and the Bible says in this verse that he will do it, “In the temple.” That means that the temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt. And there is a great move today to rebuild the temple on the temple mount in Jerusalem. You know that there is a great furor about Mount Moriah where the temple was. And both Jews and Arabs are laying claim to that particular spot. It is the international hotspot, as the Bible says in Zechariah 12:3, “In the last days I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people.” That's what Zechariah says, and we're seeing that fulfilled today.

Will the temple be rebuilt? Yes, it will be rebuilt. As a matter of fact, in rabbinical circles today among ultra-orthodox Jews, they're talking about whether or not this is the time to rebuild the temple. When I've been in Jerusalem, I have visited the old city. I've gone into a particular treasury, a museum there, and seen the articles that are being prepared for temple worship there, remarkable works. They're working on robes for the priest to wear exactly as they were described in the Old Testament. They're working on silver trumpets to blow. They're working on a laver, a washbasin, a harp to play, even a box to cast lots for the scapegoat. And all of this is being done so that they can reinstitute temple worship.

Now the Bible teaches that there's coming a time when there will be an apostasy, a falling away, and then this man of sin, this beast, this antichrist, this beast of a man, is going to be revealed. Look if you will in



Second Thessalonians 2 verse 3, “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed.” The word revealed here literally means he’s going to be unveiled, he’s going to be exposed, he’s going to be uncovered. Now if the rapture’s very near, that means that the antichrist is alive and well on planet earth right now, if the rapture is very close. The beast is here waiting to be disclosed, because today he is disguised. Today he is veiled. But if the rapture comes today, then tomorrow or very soon he will be unveiled.

Now the apostle Paul makes it very clear that there is in our world today already the spirit of antichrist. Look if you will in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 6. And he says, “And now you know what withholdeth, that he,” the antichrist, “might be revealed,” or uncovered, “in his time.” And then look for verse 7, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.” For the word let there, write in your Bible the word restrain. He who restrains will restrain. To let is an old-fashioned word which means to restrain. So what’s he saying in these verses? He is saying that there is a spirit in the world today called, “The mystery of iniquity.” Wickedness was already working. It was at work in Paul’s time, and it has continued to work in the world today. All of the filth, all of the debauchery is there. We’re up against spirit beings. We’re up against organized, brilliant, invisible, tireless demon spirits that the Bible calls, “The mystery of iniquity.” It is a devilish conspiracy. And yet that conspiracy is going to come together in the last days under the antichrist.

Now the Bible says, however, that this conspiracy is being held back. It is being restrained at this moment. Look, if you will, in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 7, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now restrains will restrain, until he be taken out of the way.” Who is the restrainer? Who has Satan on a leash? You see, Satan is not able to do everything that he wants to do or would do, could do, and will do one day. There is someone who is restraining Satan. Satan’s superman. Satan’s counterfeit Christ. He cannot yet have his way. Who is this one who is doing the restraining? Well, he is the Holy Spirit. Now the Holy Spirit has a ministry both to the saint, His ministry is to help the saint, but He also has a ministry to hinder Satan. So He is both helping the saint and hindering Satan at the same time.

Now when Jesus comes and the rapture takes place and we’re caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air, the Holy Spirit that lives in us is going to be taken out of the way. You see, the church right now, filled with the Holy Spirit, is the great boulder in Satan’s superhighway. The devil would love to see this church gone. The devil would love to have this kind of preaching no longer. The devil would love to see you and your prayers and the Holy Spirit in you taken out of the way, because you are an impediment. You are a hindrance, because these verses speak of both a Who and a what. The who is the Holy Spirit. The what is the church. And one of these days in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye folks, we’re getting out of here. And when we do, when we do, Hell will have a holiday. “He who restrains will restrain until he be taken out of the way.”

What is the church? The church is salt and light, salt and light! What does salt do? Salt purifies. Salt preserves. Salt decontaminates. It also stings and irritates. We are the salt of the earth, and when that salt is taken out, then the putrefaction will begin. We are the light of the world. When that light is taken out, then darkness will engulf this globe. And when the Holy Spirit, who indwells the church is taken away in the sense that He indwells the church and He just simply stands aside, it is at that moment, friend, that Hell will have a holiday.



You know, the people of this world don't like Bible-believing Christians anyway. They think that we are an impediment. They think we're odd. They think we're weird. They think we're stubborn. They think we're standing in the way of progress. So one of these days, we'll be out of here. One of these days we'll be gone. And then the restrainer will no longer be here, and at that time, folks, you might as well try to dam up Niagara Falls with toothpicks as to hold back the flood of wickedness and evil that will come upon this world. That time is known in the Bible as the great tribulation.

But just remember what the apostle Paul is saying to the saints. He says, "You need not be disturbed. Rest with us. Rest with us. Jesus is coming." But he says, "You must not be deceived! Don't let somebody write some bogus letter to you. Don't let some charlatan deceive you about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." We are not in the tribulation yet. The tribulation takes place after the rapture of the church, when there's a falling away and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, the antichrist.

Now, folks, when you see what the antichrist can do and will do, you will bless God for the restrainer. You better praise God for the Holy Spirit. This man, this man will be the devil incarnate. His intellectual genius will be great. His authority will be overpowering. His hatreds will be extraordinary. His techniques will be superb. Men will be willing to die for the antichrist. Women will swoon and faint at his feet. Little children will breathe his name with praise. He will come as a great world leader. He'll be a part of Satan's master plan, which is tied to Satan's master man. But we're going to see next Sunday how Satan will turn this world into a vast concentration camp with all of the inmates numbered. Everybody must receive a number to buy or sell. No sign, no sell. No mark, no merchandise. We're going to talk about that next week. But he will be evil wickedness distilled. He will be all of the Hitlers, the Napoleons, the Stalins, the Saddam Husseins, all melded into one man; so much that the Bible calls him, "The man of sin." The computer will have all people who are here registered. As we've told you before, at that time men will be regimented with no escape. The more machines act like men, the more men will act like machines, and they will do that during the great tribulation. There will be days of torture and terror, and people who do not receive the Lord Jesus Christ in this day and in this age will believe the lies of the antichrist. Look if you will in verses 11 and 12 on Second Thessalonians chapter 2, "And for this cause God, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." I wish we had more time to talk about that, but I want to get to the third point.

First point is this, listen to me, you should not be disturbed. Second point, you must not be deceived. He says, "Let no man deceive you." Third point, **you will not be disappointed**. Look if you will in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 8. He says, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming." Right there is the Battle of Armageddon. "And then shall that Wicked be revealed," literally, it, "Wicked one." Notice in my Bible, "The Wicked," is capitalized. It refers to a person. And it has the masculine singular ending. "Then shall that Wicked One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." What does it mean, "Consume with the spirit of His mouth?" Do you know how the Battle of Armageddon is going to be fought? It's going to be fought with a word, comes out of Jesus' mouth. Do you know what that word's going to be? "Drop dead." "He's going to consume him, He's going to consume him with the spirit of His mouth and the brightness of His coming." Now what I've tried to tell you today is you need not be disturbed, you should not be deceived, you will not be disappointed. I am telling you with all of the unction, function, and emotion of my soul that Jesus Christ is coming again.



Now learn this, there are two aspects of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we talk about the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the word literally is His appearing. And it is not talking so much about a particular period of time as it is a series of events, that take place when our Lord comes again. First of all, **He's coming for His bride**, and that coming is going to be sweet and secret. Second Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 1, go back and look at it again. "And now we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him." "When He shall come with trumpet sound, oh may I then in be, Him be found." First Thessalonians 4 verses 16 and 17, "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. And we which remain and are alive shall be caught up to meet them in the air."

Now He is coming for His bride, and then secondly, **He is coming with His bride**. He comes first of all at the rapture to take us out, then after the tribulation He is coming back to this Earth to rule and to reign with His bride. Now verse 8 speaks of His coming this time with His bride. He is coming back now in glory and power. He's coming first of all sweetly as a Bridegroom. Then He's coming back sovereignly as a King, and thank God for that.

Now what is going to happen is this; that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to destroy antichrist. He is coming in all of His majesty. Antichrist, as we're going to see next Sunday, has a number that he will give to all. It is the number 6-6-6. We're going to talk about that. But this verse that we're looking at right now tells us that 777's going to take care of 666, folks. That's what he's saying right here. He's saying here that, "And then shall that Wicked," 666, "be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth," that is 777. You see, when Jesus came the first time, He suffered in shame. When He comes again, He is coming to reign in glory. When Jesus came the first time, they crowned Him with thorns. When He comes again, He will wear a crown of glory. When He came the first time, He came to die in the sinner's place. When He comes the second time, He is coming to execute judgment on the unsaved sinner. Jesus is both Savior and Judge. He says in John 5 verse 22, "The Father judges no man; He has committed all judgment unto the Son." The first time He came, He came, "To seek and to save that which is lost." Luke 19:10. When He comes again, according to our Scripture in the first chapter and verse 8 of First Thessalonians, He's coming in flaming fire, to take vengeance on those who, "Know not God and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." When He came the first time, He came in the greatest of humility, riding on a donkey in humility. When He comes again, He is coming in power and glory. When He came the first time, He was rejected of men. When He comes the second time, "Every knee shall bow," even the knee of every unbeliever will bow and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Now what has our Scripture told us today? Three things: we need not be disturbed. Now friend, if I did not know the Bible, if I did not know Bible prophecy, if I did not understand who Jesus is and what God plans for us, I want to tell you something, I would be a world-class pessimist. This world is like a Shakespearean tragedy. When you read a Shakespearean tragedy, you know it's coming to an untimely end, and there's nothing that can stop it, apart from Jesus. That's the way our world is. Without the Lord Jesus Christ, I would be an industrial-strength pessimist, but you're looking at a glowing optimist. We need not be disturbed! We must not be deceived, because, friend, we will not be disappointed. You can bank on it; that Jesus Christ, who came the first time, is coming again. Acts 1:11, "That same Jesus," that angel said, "which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come in like manner as you've seen Him go into Heaven."



Now what does this mean to all of us? Friend, it means in these glorious days in which we're living in the beginning of the end, we need to be moving up one step higher. These are not days to let up or back up or shut up until we're taken up. What we need to do is to press the battle right to the gates. I want to go up as a growing Christian. I want to be a better Christian tomorrow than I am today. I want to love Jesus more this afternoon than I do this morning. I want to be growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And the great apostle Paul, the great apostle Paul at the end of his life said in Philippians 3 verse 14, "I'm reaching for the prize of the high calling of God." At the end of his life, he's still climbing. He's still going up.

What does that mean? Folks, it means there is the intercession factor. If Jesus Christ is coming, we ought to be praying for unsaved loved ones that don't know Jesus. We ought to be getting as many ready for the rapture as we can by winning souls to Jesus Christ. But not only is there the intercession factor, let me tell you what else there is, friend. There's the soul-winning factor. Be telling people about Jesus. "Friends all around us are trying to find what their heart yearns for by sin undermined. We have the secret, we know where 'tis found. Only true pleasures in Jesus abound." We need to be winning souls. I'll tell you what else there is. There's the preparation factor. You need to be getting into your children Bible Truth. This world is becoming so vile, so wicked so fast, you need to teach your children. You need to build Bible Truth into your children. You need to get these messages on prophecy into your heart and then into their hearts. Prepare them for what is coming on the Earth. I feel sorry for those who do not understand, who do not have a solid rock to stand on in these dangerous days in which we're living. And last of all, friend, there is the comfort factor. Thank God, thank God we can say, "Lord Jesus, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Now if that bothers you that Jesus is coming and we're going, you know what it tells me? You just love this world, and you don't love Jesus. But, friend, if you love the Lord Jesus, you can hardly wait. What a day that will be when, "He shall come with trumpet sound, and together we'll be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." And I want to say with the psalmist, "I'll be satisfied when I awaken in His likeness." Won't you?

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



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