



THE UNFINISHED STORY OF CHRISTMAS

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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The Unfinished Story of Christmas

SERMON REFERENCE: 2 Thessalonians 1:7-11

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2266

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, who came to this Earth to save us from our sins. But the story of Christmas is not complete without the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The best is yet to be; the story is not finished until Jesus comes again.

There are three things about the unfinished story of Christmas that ought to give us great cheer.

First, we don't need to be disturbed.

2 Thessalonians 1:7 says "...and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven..." In these gloriously dark days, our hope is not in politics, sociology, or science. Our hope is in Jesus Christ, who is coming again. When we see Him, we will wonder at His transforming love, His amazing grace, and His keeping power

Second, we should not be deceived.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 says, "Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed..." From the time Jesus Christ came into this world, Satan has been moving against Him. And in the Last Days, Satan will fling his final insult into the face of God: the antichrist.

There is unbelievable wickedness in the world today, but its evil is restrained by the Church, which is the salt and the light of the world. When Jesus raptures the Church, corruption will begin, and the antichrist will be revealed. Those who do not receive the truth when it is preached now will believe the antichrist in his reign.

Finally, we will not be disappointed.

The first time Jesus came, there was no room for Him in the inn; when He comes again, He's coming as King of kings and Lord and lords. Jesus came the first Christmas to die in the sinner's place. Jesus is coming the second Christmas to receive the sinner to Himself.

Adrian Rogers says, "Our faith looks backward to a crucified Savior. Our love looks upward to a crowned Savior. And our hope looks forward to a coming Savior."

LIFE APPLICATION

Do you know Jesus and believe in His First and Second Coming? Do not be disturbed, deceived, or disappointed. Adrian Rogers says, "The one sure hope of this jittery old world is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ."



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The Jesus who came the first time is coming again.
 - i) Christmas is not complete without the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
 - ii) The incarnation without the coronation is like east without west.
- b) The first coming of Jesus and His Second Coming are linked together.
 - i) Luke 1:31-33 speaks not only of the Jesus who redeemed, but also of the Jesus who reigned.
 - ii) The most glorious fact of the past is that Jesus came the first time.
 - iii) The most glorious fact of the future is that Jesus is coming again.
- c) The one sure hope of this world is the Second Coming of Jesus.
- d) There is going to be a glorious contrast.
 - i) The first time He came to die in the sinner's place.
 - (1) He is coming again to execute judgment upon those who refuse such love.
 - ii) He came the first time as a messenger of love.
 - (1) He is coming again in vengeance as a righteous judge.
 - iii) He came the first time in the greatest of humility.
 - (1) He is coming again as King of kings and Lord of lords.
 - iv) When He came the first time He came as the lowly Nazarene.
 - (1) When He comes again He is coming as the one who will rule and reign over the universe.
 - v) He came the first time and was despised and rejected by men.
 - (1) He is coming again to be glorified and admired in all of them who believe.

2) YOU NEED NOT BE DISTURBED

- a) Rest with us.
 - i) Be at ease; quit your worry.
- b) This world is so dark, gloriously dark, because the darkest hour of the night is just before the dawn.
 - i) Our hope is not in politics.
 - ii) Our hope is not in sociology.
 - iii) Our hope is not in science.
 - iv) The only sure hope for this world is the Second Coming of Jesus.
- c) Think of the "who" of His coming.
 - i) We are not looking for some event in history.
 - (1) We are looking for Jesus to be revealed.
 - (2) He will be revealed as the Lord Jesus.
 - ii) Today, He is despised, rejected and mocked.



- (1) But He is coming as the Lord Jesus to be glorified and admired.
- iii) For the unsaved, His coming will strike terror in their hearts.
- iv) For the saved, His coming will be glorious.
- v) It is the Lord Jesus who is coming.
- d) Think of the “when” of His coming.
 - i) Not if, but “when” He comes.
 - ii) The date is known to God alone.
 - (1) Any man who sets a date for the Second Coming has committed blasphemy for the Bible forbids it.
 - iii) His coming is like the sunrise.
 - (1) You cannot hurry a sunrise, and you cannot stop it.
- e) Think of the “wonder” of His coming.
 - i) “Admired” in 2 Thessalonians 1:10 means “to be wondered at.”
 - (1) It has the idea of awe, wonder.
 - ii) We will wonder at His transforming love.
 - (1) His saints will be those who were stubborn, unbelieving, wicked people who were transformed, just like us.
 - (2) When we see the saints with Him, there will not be one vestige of sin, not one spot on them.
 - iii) We will wonder at His amazing grace.
 - (1) It does not say that He will be glorified in those who give lots of money, live impeccable lives or are big shots.
 - (2) It says that He will be glorified in all of those who believe.
 - (3) If you want to be saved, you must believe in Jesus Christ, truly believe.
 - (a) This is not intellectual belief.
 - (b) When you put your faith where God puts your sins, on the Lord Jesus, that is amazing grace.
 - (c) There is nothing you can do to earn it, buy it or deserve it.
 - (4) Put your faith in Jesus, and He will save you and keep you saved.
 - (5) These saints got to be like Jesus because they believed on Him.
 - (6) We will not get to Heaven by our good works.
 - iv) We will wonder at His keeping power.
 - (1) “All them that believe.”
 - (2) Not a one is lost.
 - (3) Of those who put their faith in Jesus, not one will perish.
 - (4) “Because our testimony among you was believed in that day.”
 - (a) There is power in the Gospel.
 - (b) If you believe in this day, then you will be in that group of saint sin that day.
 - (i) He will never forsake you.
 - (c) What a privilege it is to share the amazing grace of our Lord with others.
 - f) Do not be troubled in these last days.



3) YOU NEED NOT BE DECEIVED

- a) "Our gathering together unto Him" speaks of the rapture.
- b) "The day of Christ" speaks of the Great Tribulation.
 - i) A day of judgment that is coming to the world.
- c) "Letteth" in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 means "restrains."
- d) Paul was writing to the saints in Thessalonica, who were going through excruciatingly hard times.
- e) Someone had written a forged letter and signed Paul's name to it.
 - i) It was a lie, and it said that they were already in the Great Tribulation and had missed the rapture.
- f) Paul tells them to not be deceived, the letter is a lie.
- g) From the time that Jesus came to this world, Satan has been moving against Him.
 - i) Satan moved in the heart of Herod (a type of the antichrist) to destroy boy babies, hoping to destroy Jesus.
 - ii) Throughout His earthly ministry, Satan tried to destroy Jesus.
- h) We now come to the last days when Satan will fling his final insults into the face of God.
 - i) "Falling away" means apostasy.
 - ii) The agent of blasphemy will be "the man of sin."
 - (1) This is Satan's counterfeit of Jesus.
- i) The "man of sin" has many aliases:
 - i) "the man of lawlessness"
 - (1) He will not be subject to the law of God.
 - ii) "the incarnation of wickedness"
 - (1) Jesus was the incarnation of God.
 - iii) "the champion of wickedness"
 - iv) "wickedness in human form"
 - (1) Jesus was God in human form.
 - (2) There is coming in the last days one who is the devil in human form.
 - (a) John calls him "the beast."
 - (b) In John's epistles, he called the man of sin "the antichrist."
 - (i) "Anti" means "against" and "instead of."
 - (ii) He will be against Christ and will show himself instead of the Lord Jesus.
- j) History began with the sin of man and will end with the man of sin.
 - i) He will be the epitome of evil.
- k) Satan has always wanted worship.
 - i) At the end of the age, and we are seeing so much of it today, Satan finally gains the worship on this Earth that he wants.
 - (1) 2 Thessalonians 2:4 tells us that the temple will be rebuilt.
 - (a) Three-and-a-half years after the rapture of the church, the temple can be rebuilt.
 - (2) The man of sin, the beast, will move into the temple and proclaim that he is God.
 - (a) Wicked blasphemies will come out of his heart and mind.
 - (b) The Bible calls this "the mystery of iniquity."



- l) “Withholdeth” in 2 Thessalonians 2:6 means “restrains.”
 - m) The mystery of iniquity is already at work.
 - n) “And ye know what withholdeth.”
 - i) “What” here refers to the church.
 - ii) Jesus said the church is the salt of the Earth and the light of the world.
 - (1) If you take the light and salt out, corruption begins.
 - (a) Darkness cannot overcome light.
 - iii) “He who restrains” in this passage is the Holy Spirit who lives in the church.
 - (1) He is restraining antichrist.
 - iv) One day, the rapture will occur, and the church will be taken up and out of here.
 - (1) When this happens, a floodgate of iniquity will come upon the Earth.
 - (a) Right now, Satan is on a leash and can only go so far.
 - (b) But then, he will be released, and demon spirits will infest this Earth and the Great Tribulation will take place.
 - o) Some people believe that they can hear the Gospel today, and then get saved after Jesus comes.
 - i) This is not so.
 - ii) If you refuse Jesus with your eyes wide open, then you will believe the antichrist.
 - (1) If you do not receive the truth when it is preached or proclaimed, it is God’s righteous justice that you will believe a lie.
 - p) The antichrist is coming.
 - i) The devil in the flesh.
 - ii) His intellectual genius will be great, and his authority overpowering.
 - iii) His hatred will be extraordinary.
 - iv) Men will be willing to die for him; children will betray parents for him.
- 4) YOU NEED NOT BE DISAPPOINTED
- a) Two aspects of the Lord’s coming.
 - i) He is coming secretly for His bride.
 - ii) He is coming back with His bride.
 - (1) He is coming secretly like a bridegroom, and He is coming sovereignly like a King.
 - b) There was no room for Jesus in the inn the first time that He came.
 - i) When He comes again, He is coming as King of kings and Lord of lords.



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Would you take God's precious, inspired, inerrant, wonderful Word and turn to Second Thessalonians chapter 1? We're talking today about the unfinished Christmas story, or as Paul Harvey would say, "The rest of the story."

Now you see, the Jesus who came the first time is coming again, and Christmas is not complete without the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The incarnation without the coronation would be like east without west. It would be like an engagement without a marriage. The story is not complete until Jesus comes again.

We all know the old story about the man who was in a hotel room late at night, very weary, going to bed, took off one of his shoes and dropped it on the floor with a thud. And then he thought, "That's so thoughtless of me. There's somebody beneath me. I shouldn't have dropped that shoe like that." So he took the other shoe off and quietly put it on the floor. In about an hour and a half somebody knocked at his door. It was the man in the room beneath him. He said, "Would you please drop the other shoe." We're waiting for the dropping of the other shoe. Now, I love Christmas. Hey, the best is yet to be. Not only the incarnation, but the coronation.

I was raised during the times they call the Great Depression, and we didn't have a lot of the toys that kids have today. As a matter of fact, we had very few things. And when we played ball, we played ball with a bat that had been broken and wrapped up with electric tape, friction tape we called it. We had a ball that had tape around it. And, by the way, if the guy who owned the ball went home, the game was over. That was it. I mean, we didn't have a Nintendo or Game Boy or Play Station, or something. We didn't have that.

And there were three of us. We had one bicycle. Where it came from, I don't know. Somebody gave it to our family. It was a big bicycle. Now, a normal size bicycle is 26 inches. This one was 28 inches. It was black, had no fenders on it, but it was sturdy. And all of us, my sister, it wasn't a girl's bike, but she had to ride that bike, an older sister. I have an older brother and I was the youngest of the three. We rode that old black bicycle, big thing. I learned how to ride not by sitting on the seat, because I couldn't reach the pedals if I did that. I learned how to ride by putting my leg underneath the bar and holding the bicycle out that way and riding with the bicycle, now, really, I couldn't straddle that bar that went across on a boy's bicycle, so that's the way I rode my bike, when I got a chance to ride it. Big old black bicycle like that.

And I can remember Christmas. We had a Christmas, and I thought it was a pretty good Christmas, but very frankly, I thought my brother and sister got just a tad more than I did. But it was Christmas and you know you're not supposed to complain, and so forth. And so, I just was happy. And, "Adrian, do you like your presents?" "Yes, ma'am; yes, Daddy. Thank you very much."

But then they said, "We're going over to see Uncle Rufus on Christmas Day." Well, I said, "Fine." So went over to see Uncle Rufus, and after we visited for a while, they said, "Adrian, go out and look



on the front porch.” And I went out and looked on the front porch, and there was a 24-inch, brand new, candy apple red, Schwinn bicycle that was mine. Wow! I mean, I could not believe it. You know, I thought it was a good Christmas, but, friend, I want to tell you, the best is yet to come. Not only that Christmas so long ago, but this Christmas today. Now, friend, thank God for what we have, but I tell you, the Heavenly Father has so much more when Jesus comes again. The Christ of Christmas is coming again.

I want you to take your Bibles and look if you will here in Second Thessalonians chapter 1 and let’s begin in verse 7 and let’s read through verse 11. Now, Paul was talking to some people who were living in chaotic, chaotic times, and he says this, “And 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 that 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. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would account you worthy of His calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power.” What wonderful, wonderful Scripture.

You see, we get all wrapped up in the little baby, the baby that was born, and we then go even beyond the birth of the baby and we say, “Yes, He came to die for our sins.” Thank God He did that. But I want to remind you now of the Christmas message and see how the First Coming of Jesus and the Second Coming are linked together.

Put in your margin there by Second Thessalonians, the first chapter, put this Scripture down, the Christmas story, Luke 1. Listen to what the angel said in Luke 1 to Mary concerning the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Luke 1 verse 31 to verse 33, “And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call His name Jesus.” Well, that literally happened, did it not? That’s history. Say Amen. She conceived. She brought forth a son. She did call His name Jesus. “And He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest.” Well, He was great, is great. He is the Son of the Highest. Now watch this. Listen to the rest of the story, “And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” It speaks not only of the Jesus who redeemed, but the Jesus who reigned. Not only Jesus who came the first time, but Jesus who is coming again the second time to sit upon the throne of His father David and to rule over the house of Jacob, and that’s the name for fleshly Jews, forever and ever. The most glorious fact of the past is that Jesus came the first time. The most glorious fact of the future is that this Jesus is coming again. And I want to tell you, the one sure hope; the one sure hope of this jittery old world is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Can you imagine without the Second Coming of Jesus, the Resurrection, the Rapture, and all of that, can you imagine what it would be like? I preached a funeral a while back. Man in our church died, a dear man, a beloved man. I sat there. I saw all those flowers. I saw the children. I saw the grandchildren. I went up and looked at the flowers. And one said, “To Pop.” Another said, “To Grandpop.” I watched that sweet widow who lived with that man for so long, and they had both



come up to a full, ripe age. I watched her as she went up. Now these folks had lived together for over fifty years. I watched her as she just put her hand on that coat sleeve, gave it a little tug and then turned and walked away.

And I thought: how terrible it must be to be an atheist. She wasn't, she was a true believer. What do atheists do in times like that? I mean is this all it is? Are we just going to get sick and die and go into the ground and that's it? No! Jesus is coming again. First Thessalonians chapter 4 verses 16 and 17 tell us, "The dead in Christ will rise first, and we which remain and are alive shall be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord." Even so, come, Lord Jesus. I'm telling you, His first coming without His second coming would be like an engagement without a wedding. No, He is coming again, and I thank God for that.

Now, there's going to be a glorious contrast. That's what Paul is talking about here. He is talking about the contrast. You see, the first time He came, He came to die in the sinner's place. This Scripture tells us that when He comes again, He's coming to execute judgment upon those who refuse such love. When He came the first time He came as a messenger of love. When He comes again He is coming in vengeance, as a righteous judge. When He came the first time, He came in the greatest of humility, Deity in diapers. When He comes again, He's coming as King of kings and Lord of lords. When He came the first time, He came as the lowly Nazarene. When He comes again, He's coming as the one who will rule and reign over the universe. The first time He was despised and rejected of men. This Scripture tells us He's coming to be glorified and admired, and all of them that believe. No longer a crown of thorns; a diadem. Not a cradle of straw, but a crown of glory.

Now with that in mind, as we think about the rest of the story, may I lay three things upon your heart? Three things that ought to give you Christmas cheer, three things that ought to help you in this weary old world in which we live, three thoughts to carry with you from this service today.

Number one, according to this Scripture, you need not be disturbed. Look if you will in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 7, "And you who are troubled rest with us." That is, be at ease. Quit your worry. Are you troubled today? Listen. It is not over yet. There is an unfinished story. If you're troubled, rest with us. You say, "Pastor, it's so dark." Yes, it's gloriously dark, because the darkest hour of the night is just before the sunrise. Our hope is not in politics. Our hope is not in sociology. Our hope is not in science. The only sure hope, I say, for this jittery old world is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, let's just look in these verses for a moment. Look in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 7 and think about who is coming again. Look at it, "And to you who are troubled rest with us," now underscore this, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed." The Lord Jesus, that's who's coming again. We're not looking for some event in history. We're looking for Jesus Christ to be revealed. And when He's revealed, He's going to be revealed as the Lord Jesus. Today He is despised. He is rejected. He is mocked. But He is coming as the Lord Jesus to be glorified and admired. Look at it now in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired." Now, if you're unsaved, you're not one of His saints; His coming will strike stark terror in your heart. But if you're saved, you're going to say, "Oh glory to the Lamb. Isn't He beautiful, isn't He?" He's coming to



be admired. That's the Who of His coming. Do you see it in verse 7? Say this with me, "Lord Jesus." Say it, "Lord Jesus." It's the Lord Jesus who is coming. "This same Jesus which is taken from you up into Heaven shall so come in like manner." Acts 1:11.

But think not only of the Who of His coming, but think of the when of His coming. Look in verse 10 again, "When He shall come." Do you see that? Say when. When. Not if, when. There're no ifs, ands, or buts about it. Jesus Christ is coming again. Well, you say, "Are you going to tell us the date?" No. The date, that's a time known to God alone, and that, Jesus Christ Him said in Matthew 24 verse 36, "Even the angels don't know that time, only My Father." And any man who sets a date for the Second Coming of Jesus has committed blasphemy, because the Bible forbids it.

But yet there is a when, not if. "When the Lord Jesus shall come." That's what our verse says. His coming is like the sunrise. That's what Malachi said. Malachi said in chapter 4 verse 2, "Unto you that fear My name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise." One thing about the sunrise, you can't hurry it and you can't stop it, Amen? You can't hurry it and you can't stop it. Jesus' coming is like the sunrise. The Sun of righteousness, s-u-n, like the sun that comes. It's coming. Inexorably, Jesus is coming. We don't know when. It may be this afternoon at 2:32 that Jesus comes, or some date just like that, but Jesus is coming again. "The Sun of righteousness shall arise."

I heard about a little boy one night sat up all night wondering where the sun went, and finally it dawned on him. The coming of Jesus is going to be like that. One day Jesus Christ will pull back the shades of night and pin them with a star, open the door of the morning, and flood the world with the sunlight of His presence. What a day that will be. The Lord Jesus is coming again. We think of the who of His coming. We think of the when of His coming.

And then I want you to look with me for just a moment at the wonder of His coming. Look if you will in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10. Watch it, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired." Do you see the word admired in verse 10? The word admired literally means: to be wondered at. It has the idea of awe, wonder. When we see Jesus, we're not going to see Him as a baby with His little dimpled feet there in the straw. He will come to be glorified, and oh, how we will wonder, how we will admire Him.

Let me mention some things that we will wonder at when we see Him. For example, we're going to wonder at His transforming love. Look at Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints." His saints. Well, who do you think those saints are going to be? They're going to be those who were stubborn, God-hating, unbelieving, wicked, lascivious people who were transformed, just like some of us. There are going to be those who were once ignorant and blind, who stumbled in darkness and now have seen the light. These are His saints. They are going to be those who were demonized by sex and drugs and greed. And now they're going to be like the Lord Jesus Christ. And there when we see them with Him, not a vestige of sin, not a spot, not a wrinkle. He's going to be glorified with His saints. Folks, what transforming love.

And we will wonder at His amazing grace. We will wonder not only at His transforming love, we will wonder at His saving grace. Look again at verse 10. It doesn't say, "He's going to be glorified in all of those who gave tons of money to the church." Doesn't say, "He's going to be glorified in all of



those who lived impeccable lives or who were big shots.” “All of those who believe!” Now you think of that. Don’t go past that. Friend, that’s grace.

Do you know how you get to Heaven? Suppose God said, “Everybody who wants to be saved, run around the block.” Some little children can’t run. Suppose He said, “Everybody who wants to be saved, read a chapter in the Bible.” Some people can’t read. Suppose He said, “Everybody who wants to be saved, give a hundred dollars.” Some don’t have a hundred dollars. But He is coming to be glorified in all those that believe.

You say, “That’s too simple. Let’s do something else.” As a matter of fact, we hear today a lot of preaching and prating about: easy believe-ism. “Oh, I’m opposed to easy believe-ism.” Be careful when you say that. What do you want, hard believe-ism? Be careful that unless you in your effort to make stronger, better saints, you say it’s not just enough to believe. Friend, I want to tell you. You listen to me. It is enough to believe in Jesus, if you truly believe. I’m not talking about intellectual belief. I’m talking about the belief that says trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for one moment of faith. When you put your faith where God put your sins, then that is grace, amazing grace. There’s nothing you can do to earn it, buy it, or deserve it. You put your faith in Jesus, and He’ll save you, mister, and He’ll keep you saved. We’ll see that.

Look at these people. They’re saints. They’re like Jesus. How did they get to be that way? They believed on Him. The Bible says surely, simply, sweetly, sublimely in Acts 16:31, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.” That’s amazing. When we see that, we say, “No, no, it’s got to be more. We got to do something else.” That just chops the legs out of the self-righteous person who thinks he’s going to strut to Heaven by his own good works. God says in Isaiah chapter 64 verse 6, “Your good works are like filthy rags in My sight.” You just cast yourself upon Him in mercy. Put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And when you see Him, you will wonder at His transforming power when you see the saints. You will wonder at His saving grace.

I’ll tell you something else you will wonder at. You will wonder at His keeping power. Look again in Second Thessalonians 1 verse 10, “When He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired,” now watch this, “in,” what’s the next little three-letter word? “All.” Say it. All. “All them that believe.” Not a one is lost. When you put your faith in Jesus Christ, I’m telling you, not one will perish.

“And the soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes. That soul, though all Hell should endeavor to shake, I’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”

Oh, when we see Him, the Bible says we are going to admire Him. We’re going to be glorified. And look at it. Look at it in verse 10, “Because our testimony among you was believed in that day.” Oh, thank God for the power of the Gospel. “Our testimony among you.” That’s why I’m preaching. That’s why I got on my knees before I stepped out here. I want you to believe what I’m telling you. You believe in this day and, friend, in that day you will be in that group called saints. You will be in that group because you put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will never, no never, no never, no never forsake you. You will be glorifying and admiring the Lord Jesus, all of those that believe.

I led a man to Christ a while back, a little old man that came by asking for some money, and I was so busy. I just kind of brushed him off. I just took a little money out of my pocket and gave it to him,



said, "God bless you." Ten or twenty dollars or something, I don't even remember. And I got back to my business, and God said, "Adrian, you didn't talk to him about Jesus." I said, "But, Lord, I'm busy." He said, "But you should have witnessed to him." "I gave him some money." "That isn't really what he needs." "Lord, you know, well, anyway, God, he's gone." He said, "You could catch him." I said, "You're right," and I stopped and ran down the street and caught him.

I said, "Wait a minute. Come back a moment." Told him about Jesus. He was open. He prayed, received Christ as his personal Savior. I put my arm around him and hugged him and prayed for him and sent him on. I expect to meet him in Heaven. Why? "Because our testimony among you was believed." What a privilege. What a privilege just to share the amazing grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I can hardly wait for the day when He comes to be glorified and to be admired, and He's going to show who is the King of kings and the blessed and only potentate.

Now, don't you get the heebie-jeebies in these last days. Don't you go around with headline hysteria. "You who are troubled rest with us." Jesus is coming again. That we can be sure of: a rock-solid, rock-ribbed hope. And again I want to tell you, the only hope of this jittery old world is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I believe that with all of my heart. If you're counting on anything else, you remind me of somebody rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic.

Second thing I want to lay on your heart: you should not be deceived. Now, you should not be disturbed, but you should also not be deceived. Now go to the second chapter. We're in Second Thessalonians, the second chapter and now notice how Paul continues this in verses 1 and 2, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him," that's called the Rapture, "that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, that the day of Christ is at hand." That literally means the Great Tribulation. The day of Christ is a day of judgment that is coming to the world.

There were some who were thinking that they were in the Great Tribulation because times were so hard. And then he says, look in Second Thessalonians 2 verses 3 through 12, "Let no man deceive you by any means." Now the point I'm making is, you should not be deceived. "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, the son of perdition; 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. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doeth already work: only He who now letteth," or restrains, "will restrain, until He be taken out of the way. 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: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause 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." The point is, we need not be disturbed and we should not be deceived.

Again, look in verse 3, "Let no man deceive you." Now, let me give you the background for this. Paul is writing to the saints at Thessalonica, and they were going through excruciatingly hard times. And somebody had written a devilish lie, a forged letter, had signed Paul's name to it and said, "You're already in the Great Tribulation. You have missed the Rapture. You're already in the Great Tribulation." And Paul said, "Now, wait a minute. Don't be deceived as if you've gotten some letter from us. No, that is not true." Now it was a lie, and he took the opportunity of a lie to tell the truth, because there can't be a lie unless it's a lie about the truth. So now he has this truth. He's going to declare the truth.

Now what has happened is this: From the time that Jesus Christ came into this world, Satan has been moving against Him. Satan moved in the heart of Herod, who is a type of the antichrist, to destroy all the little boy babies, hoping to destroy the Lord Jesus Christ. And all through His earthly ministry, Satan tried to destroy the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now we come to the last days when Satan will fling his final insult into the face of God. The final blasphemy will consummate not in the Christ, but in the antichrist. The Bible here calls him, "The man of sin." Look in Second Thessalonians 2 verse 3, "Let no man deceive you. That day," that is, the day of Christ, "shall not come, except there come a falling away first," the word falling away means apostasy, "and that man of sin," not a man of sin, but, "that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." Now this agent of blasphemy is going to be, "The man of sin." He is Satan's counterfeit of the Christ of Christmas who is coming again. This, "Man of sin." I want you to listen. If you're not careful you'll be deceived by the spirit of antichrist, so listen very carefully.

This, "Man of sin," has many aliases. Now right here he is called: "The man of sin." I looked this up in other translations. Let me give you some other translations will help you to see just who he is. In one place the same word is translated, "The man of lawlessness." That is, he will not be subject to the law of God. Another translation gives it, "The incarnation of wickedness." Now Jesus was the incarnation of God. This man, this man of sin, "The incarnation of wickedness." Another translation gives it, "The champion of wickedness." Another gives it, "Wickedness in human form." You see, Jesus Christ was God in human form. There is coming in the last days one who is the devil in human form. The apostle John called him in the book of Revelation chapter 13 verse 1, he calls him, "The beast." In his epistles, he calls him, "The antichrist." Anti means against and instead of. He is one who is coming who will be against Bethlehem's baby and will show himself instead of the Lord Jesus Christ. This man the Bible calls, "The man of sin."

Back in the Garden of Eden, history began with the sin of man. It will consummate with the man of sin. He will be the epitome of evil. You see, the devil has always wanted worship. That's what he's all about. He wants to be like the Most High God. He's always wanted to be worshipped. Isaiah 14 verses 13 and 14, "I will be as God. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will be like the Most High," Satan said. Now we see him in the end of the age, and we're seeing so much of it today, which makes me believe that we're at the end of the age, that Satan himself wants to be worshipped and



is finally gaining the worship on this earth that he wants. Look in Second Thessalonians the second chapter and verse 4. It speaks of this man of sin, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God," that's exactly what Satan wanted to do in Isaiah 14, "or that is worshipped; so that he as god sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is god."

Now that tells us that the temple in Jerusalem is going to be rebuilt one of these days. And don't you think that they're not making plans to rebuild the temple. They are. That's the reason there's so much furor over that temple mount. In rabbinical circles, they are not talking about, I'm talking about ultra-orthodox, they're not talking about if the temple is going to be rebuilt; they're simply talking about when it will be rebuilt.

Here's an Israeli press release. Quote: "In the ministry of religion, a document concerning this was put forward in which proposals from all over the world were collected. Religious activists are for the erection of the temple as soon as possible. There is some opposition, but everything urges toward the building of the temple." Hey, that's not a Baptist preacher talking. Well, that's modern news, yes. But here's an ancient book who says, "There's coming a man of sin who's going to sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is god."

After the Rapture of the church, in three and a half years, that temple can be erected. After we're gone, after this Antichrist makes a league with Israel, after he says to Islam, "You can have this," and to the Jews, "You can have that." And they say, "Now, we can erect our temple." One of these days, on that temple mount that I've visited so many times, and so many of you, there is going to be a temple rebuilt. It doesn't have to be the magnificent temple that Solomon built or Herod built. It has to be enough to house the Ark of the Covenant, which I believe will soon be discovered somewhere, most likely under the temple mount. And that temple is going to be rebuilt.

And all of the orthodox Jews around the world are going to say, "Now, now we can worship according to our ancient traditions." But then this man of sin, this beast, this antichrist, this son of perdition will himself move into that temple and say, "You want to worship God? Well, you are looking at him. I am God. And the Bible says in verse 4, "So that he as god, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is god." And wicked blasphemies will belch out of his heart and out of his mind. It is what the Bible calls, "The mystery of iniquity."

Now, it's already at work. Look in verses 6 and 7. You're in Second Thessalonians chapter 2 verses 6 and 7. Now watch this, "And ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time." The word withholdeth means restrains. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now lets," and that's old English for restrains, "will restrain, until He be taken out of the way." Now he says, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work."

There is unbelievable wickedness in the world today. Have you seen it? I mean, it is the mystery of iniquity. But there is a restraining force, and he says, "And you know what withholdeth that he may be revealed in his time." Look at it, "And ye know what withholdeth."

Now what is the "what" there? What is restraining Satan today? May I tell you what it is? It's the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. You know Jesus said, "We are the salt of the earth and we're the light



of the world." You take the light out, you take the salt out, and corruption begins. Darkness cannot overcome light. Darkness can never turn out the light. We are the light. We are the salt.

And he says, "Now you know what withholdeth." But then it says, "Only He who restrains shall restrain." There's a "what" and there's a "He." The "what" is the church; the "He" is the Holy Spirit who lives in the church. And He's restraining antichrist, holding back antichrist. Now the mystery of iniquity is working, but the church is here and the Holy Spirit in the church is here. But one of these days, soon and very soon, friend, we're going home. One of these days the trumpet will sound and we're going up and out of here. And then you have taken the light out, and you've taken the salt out, and the corruption begins. And when that happens, a floodgate of iniquity is going to come upon this earth. And you might as well try to dam up Niagara Falls with toothpicks as to hold back the floodgate of wickedness that will come.

You see, right now Satan is on a leash. And he can only go so far. But then he's going to be released, and Hell will have a holiday, and demon spirits will infest this earth, and the Great Tribulation will take place. And these people had the idea they were already in the Great Tribulation. Paul says, "No, no. Not yet. There is a restraint. But one of these days he is coming upon this earth." And, friend, when that happens, when the Antichrist comes, you don't want to be here.

Now there are some people who get the idea that you can hear the Gospel in a sermon like this and after Jesus comes, then you can get saved. Nope. Sorry about that. If you refuse Jesus Christ with your eyes wide open, you're going to believe the antichrist, and God will see to it. Continue to read.

Look in Second Thessalonians, the second chapter verse 8 to 11, "Then shall that wicked," literally it means 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. Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan," that's the antichrist, "with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. For this cause," he goes on to say, "God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie."

When you don't receive the love of the truth, when you will not accept the truth when it is preached, it is God's righteous, ironic, poetic justice that you will believe a lie. This Antichrist is coming. He'll be the devil in the flesh. His intellectual genius will be great, his authority overpowering, his hatred's extraordinary, his techniques superb. Men will be willing to die for him and children will betray their parents for him. And you will believe him because he will come with all wondrous signs and lying wonders.

Now, I had much more I wanted to say about that, but I'm going to move quickly to the third point and take two or three minutes. First of all, listen to me. The Christ of Christmas is coming again. You need not be disturbed, "Rest with us." Number two, you must not be deceived. Don't let the spirit of antichrist deceive you, "Let no man deceive you." Here's the third thing, and here's the hallelujah part. You will not be disappointed. You will not be disappointed. Look in Second Thessalonians chapter 2 verses 13 and 14, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation



through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto He called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now there are two aspects of His coming. First of all, He’s coming secretly for His bride, and then He is coming with His bride. He’s coming sweetly like a bridegroom; He’s coming sovereignly like a King. Now, Jesus, there was no room for Him the first time when He came, no room in the inn. When He comes again, He’s coming as King of kings and Lord and lords.

The unfinished story of Christmas is this: that Jesus is coming again. And what Paul is telling us is this, that when He comes, 777’s going to take care of 666. That’s what he’s saying, that our Lord shall reign. Jesus came the first Christmas to die in the sinner’s place. Jesus is coming the second Christmas to receive the sinner to Himself. Our faith looks backward to a crucified Savior. Our love looks upward to a crowned Savior. And our hope looks forward to a coming Savior.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Do you know Jesus? He is coming to be glorified, admired in all them that believe. Would you believe on Him? I’m not talking about mere intellectual belief. Will you trust Him? Put your faith in Him. Will you do it now? Would you pray a prayer like this, “Lord Jesus, thank You for dying for me. I believe that You’re the virgin-born Son of God. I believe You paid my sin debt with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And I now receive You by faith as my Lord and Savior. I trust You now. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Save me, Lord Jesus.” Did you ask Him? Then with childlike faith, thank Him. “Thank You for doing it, Lord Jesus. I receive it by faith and that settles it. You’re now my Lord, my Savior, my God, and my friend. And, Jesus, I will make this public. I will not be ashamed of You, Amen and Amen.”



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