

2 Thessalonians 2

Read 2 Thessalonians 2

“Paul comes in this chapter to the heart of his letter, his explanation about the Day of the Lord and the Man of Sin. The Christians were “shaken” instead of established (1 Thes. 3:2, 13) because they had been told (falsely) that the Day of the Lord was already upon them. “At hand” in v. 2 should be “already present.” Paul explains that certain events must take place before this day of wrath and judgment can come to the world.”
Weirsbe

I. The Apostasy Must Take Place (2:1–3) - The word “apostasy” means “a falling away.” Read 1 Timothy 4:1–3, 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Discussion questions:

A. List the adjectives listed in 2 Tim. 3:1-5 that are prevalent in our world today?

B. What signs might exist in a church which might lead to a “falling away” ?

Weirsbe writes: *“While there were certainly false teachers in Paul’s day, the church at large was united on the truths of the Word of God. If you met another Christian, you knew he believed in the Word of God, the deity of Christ, and the salvation by faith in Christ. This is certainly not true today! We live in a day of “Christian unbelief”; people say they are Christians, yet deny the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, and so on.”* Do you agree or disagree? _____

II. The Temple Must Be Rebuilt (2:4–5) - *“Paul promises the rise of a world dictator, the “man of sin ... son of perdition” (v. 3). He is not talking about a world system, but a person who will head up a world system. This “man of sin” contrasts with Christ, the Savior from sin. He is the son of perdition; Christ is the Son of God. He is the liar; Christ is the Truth. We commonly call this man “the Antichrist,” which means both “against Christ” as well as “instead of Christ.” This world ruler will be energized by the devil and will unite the nations of Europe in a great federation (the ten horns of Daniel’s image, Dan. 7). According to Rev. 17, the Antichrist will cooperate with the apostate world church in his rise to power, and then will destroy this religious system when he doesn’t need it anymore.*

The program is as follows: (1) the church will be raptured; (2) the Antichrist will begin his rise to power in a peaceful way; (3) he will unite Europe and make a seven-year covenant with Israel to protect it (see Dan. 9); (4) after three and one-half years he will break that covenant and invade Israel; (5) he will abolish all religion and set himself up to be worshiped (Rev. 13); (6) at the end of the seven-year tribulation period (Day of the Lord), Christ will return to earth and destroy the Antichrist and his system. Both the OT and NT predict the return of the Jews to Palestine and the rebuilding of the Jewish temple. When the Antichrist sets himself up in the temple, this will mark the “abomination of desolation” of Dan. 11:31 and Matt. 24:15.”

Write down questions you may have to discuss in your group. _____

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III. The Restrainer Must Be Removed (2:6–12) -

- A. Who restrains evil today? _____
- B. According to verse 7 what is “already” at work? _____
- C. Who is eluded to in verse 7? _____
- D. What will happen to him when Christ appears? _____
- E. Read Romans 1:25 and verse 10 of 2Thess.2. Why will people perish? _____
- F. They did not receive the “_____” of the truth. (What does this mean?) _____
- G. How does verses 11 and 12 put an end to setting on the fence? _____

IV. The Church Must Be Completed (2:13–17) - *“The Day of the Lord applies to the Gentile nations and the Jews, but not to the church. It is a day of wrath, and the church is not destined for wrath (1 Thes. 1:10; 5:9). The purpose of the Tribulation is the punishment of the Gentiles and the purification of the Jewish nation, which by this time has returned to its own land in unbelief. But Antichrist cannot begin his rise to power until Christ has taken the church from the earth. What a contrast between the church and the followers of Antichrist! We have been saved by believing the Truth; they will be damned because they believe a lie. We have believed the good news of the Gospel; they believe the false promises of the devil. We have been chosen for glory; they are destined for hell.*

Paul makes a wonderful application: stand fast! Don’t be moved by world convulsions, political upheavals, or religious apostasy. All these things must take place, but God is still on the throne. As the end of the age draws near, it will be more and more difficult to live for Christ and serve Him. What should the Christian do? Hold on to the Word of God! Don’t listen to the lies of the devil—the teachings of the cults, the sugar-coated promises of false teachers. Hold to the Word of God! We have in Christ and His Word eternal encouragement and good hope.

We must keep on working. “Every good word and work” (v. 17) is a good motto to follow in these dark days. Keep on giving out the Word; keep on working for Christ. As we win others to Christ, we are building up the body. When the body is completed, it will be caught away to glory. This is what Peter means by “hastening the coming of the day of God” (2 Peter 3:11–12). As long as the church is in the world, Satan’s program of wickedness is held back; but once the church is gone, Satan will have more freedom. He will seek to destroy Israel and ruin mankind.

These are great and challenging days. May we be found faithful when He comes!”

Your thoughts: How then should you live as a Christian today? How serious should you be in your devotions, prayer life, family life, and daily walk with Jesus? _____

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