

CORRECTION CONCERNING THE DAY OF THE LORD
2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-17

Introduction

The believers in Thessalonica were like many believers today! They were confused concerning the doctrine of last things including the return of Christ.

Paul wrote his first epistle to this Church to try to clarify some of these things, but many of them were still having trouble understanding this doctrine.

Last week we saw that Paul had written this second letter to encourage these believers in the midst of their having to endure some severe persecution.

In this second chapter we see tonight that he writes to enlighten them more on this most important doctrine relating to Christ's second coming!

Specifically, he writes to correct their misunderstanding concerning "*The Day of the Lord*"!

We saw in an earlier message on this when we went through 1 Thessalonians where the "*Day Of The LORD*" is the beginning of God's divine judgment upon this world!

It begins at the Rapture of the Church and includes the seven-year tribulation period, Christ's Second Coming in glory at the end of the Tribulation Period, and the 1000-year reign of Christ on this earth! It will culminate with the Great White Throne judgment of unbelievers!

So "*The Day of the Lord*" is not a 24 hour period of time, but rather it is a time of judgment that spans over a number of years

I. "THE DAY OF THE LORD" AND ITS RELATION TO THE PRESENT! (Vs 1-2)

A. The Believers At Thessalonica Had Been Deceived!

1. **By spirit** - some had claimed prophetic utterance (but had been dishonest).
2. **By word** - some had mistakenly taught them things that weren't correct.

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3. **By letter** - someone had written to them and claimed to be Paul (but it wasn't Paul)!

B. The Deception Was Concerning The "Day Of The Lord" Being At Hand! (i.e. Already Present.)

1. Due to trials and sufferings that they were experiencing, **they had looked at their circumstances and were questioning the truth they had been taught.**
 - a. *Be not soon shaken in mind...*
Don't be so quick to waver in your thinking!
 - b. *Be not...troubled...*
Don't be afraid or frightened!
 - c. When they compared what they were **experiencing** with what they were **hearing...** They were confused about what to believe!
2. False teachers are still using the same methods to deceive today!
 - a. Some burst on the scene claiming they have some special revelation from God!
 - b. They may even claim that this special revelation comes from the Holy Spirit!
 - c. False teachers abound today, not just on radio and TV, but in Churches!
 - d. Written material by the ton is mailed out all over the world!
 - e. Why? The false teachers would rather you read their writings than to read the Bible.

C. Paul Is Saying Here "The Day Is Not At Hand!"

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PRESENT...

**II. “THE DAY OF THE LORD” AND IT’S RELATION TO
APOSTASY! (Vs 3a)**

A. *Falling Away = Apostasy.*

1. The meaning is to fall away from or depart from the truth.
2. Paul wrote some other passages predicting this time:
 - a. **1 Timothy 4:1**
 - b. **2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3-4**
3. Even though there were false teachers in Paul's day, most believers were united on the truth of God's Word.

B. *But We Are Living In Increasingly Apostate Days!*

1. Ours is a day of “Christian” unbelief.
2. There are many people who say they are Christians, and yet they deny the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, and many other fundamentals of the faith!
3. Fifty years ago, this kind of person would have been branded a heretic, but now he may teach in a seminary, or even preach in a Baptist Church.

C. As the apostasy becomes more and more widespread, it is an indication that the Day of the Lord is drawing nearer!

**III. “THE DAY OF THE LORD” AND ITS RELATION TO THE
ANTICHRIST! (Vs 3b-5)**

A. *The “Man Of Sin” Will Be Revealed! (Vs 3b)*

1. He is referred to as the “*man of sin*” because “*sin*” will be his chief characteristic.
2. He is also called the “*son of perdition*”! (*ruin or loss*)

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3. His Characteristics. (Vs 4)
 - a. He opposes God (he’s literally anti-Christ)!
 - b. He exalts himself above all that is called God!
 - c. He declares himself to be God.
 - d. He demands to be worshiped as God.
4. Paul states that “*The Day of Christ*” cannot come until this “*man of sin*” is revealed.

**B. *Paul Had Previously Taught Them God's Prophetic Time
Of Events? (Vs 5)***

1. The rapture of all those who are in Christ.
2. The anti-Christ is revealed and begins his rise to power in a peaceful manner.
3. He establishes a seven-year covenant with Israel.
4. The Jewish Temple will be rebuilt and their worship will be restored in the Temple.
5. 3 ½ years in, he breaks his covenant with Israel!
6. He will abolish all other worship and will set himself up as god.
7. He will be destroyed by Christ at His 2nd coming and will be cast into the lake of fire.

C. *This Was Not New Teaching!*

1. Paul had taught the believers these truths earlier.
2. However, some had been shaken in their beliefs!
3. They had been deceived!

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4. It is important to be grounded in your faith!

IV. “THE DAY OF THE LORD” AND ITS RELATION TO THE RESTRAINER! (Vs 6-9)

There is an obstacle that must be removed before the wicked antichrist can be revealed. That obstacle is the Restrainer, God the Holy Spirit, that indwells the life of believers!

A. The Reality Of The Restrainer—The Holy Spirit

The word *withholdeth* in vs 6 and *letteth* in vs 7 are translated from the exact same Greek word!

“what withholdeth” = what holdeth or holds down (Vs 6)

“he who now letteth” = holdeth or holds down (Vs 7)

B. The Restrainer Will Be Removed.

1. What we have is a reversal of the day of Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and took up residence in believers!
2. When the believers are raptured the indwelling Holy Spirit will go with us!
3. The Holy Spirit will still work, but it will be in the manner similar to how He worked prior to the day of Pentecost.
4. The removal of both the believers and the Holy Spirit will release the world to sin as it never has been before.

C. The Mystery of Iniquity Doth Already Work!

The *“mystery of iniquity”* is Satan’s counterworking to *“the mystery of godliness”* (1 Timothy 3:16)

Everything that is Anti-Christian is latently working, as distinguished from its final open manifestation.

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“Mystery” in Scripture means, not what remains always a secret, but that which is for a while hidden, but in due time manifested (cp Ephesians 3:4 with Ephesians 3:5).

1. This is the spirit of lawlessness or disobedience.
 - a. It is already at work...
 - b. But it is limited or restrained by the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit within believers.
2. This will become dominant and will be rampant until Jesus comes and destroys the anti-Christ.

V. “THE DAY OF THE LORD” AND ITS RELATION TO UNBELIEVERS! (Vs 10-12)

A. There Will Be Great Deception! (Vs 10)

1. Satan will deceive great multitudes of unbelievers!
2. They rejected the Truth, but they will receive and believe the lie!
3. They could have been saved, but now they will perish.

B. There Will Be Great Delusion! (Vs 11)

1. God will send strong delusion to those who had an opportunity to believe, but chose to reject Christ.
2. God is righteous, there will not be another opportunity for these to be saved!
3. The 'day of the Lord' is a time for judgment!

C. There Will Be Great Damnation! (Vs 12)

1. All who had opportunity to be saved, but believed not the truth!

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2. All who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, but rather had pleasure in unrighteousness!
3. The '*Left Behind*' series denies this truth!

VI. "THE DAY OF THE LORD" AND ITS RELATION TO BELIEVERS! (Vs 13-17)

A. We Are Responsible To Believe The Truth! (Vs 13-14)

1. God loved us... "*beloved of the Lord*"
2. God chose us... "*chosen you to salvation*"
3. God sanctified us... "*through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*"
4. God called us... "*called you by our gospel*"
5. God will glorify us... "*to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

B. We Are Responsible To Guard The Truth! (Vs 15)

Stand fast = do not move away from the truth.

Hold on to the truth that had been passed down to them by the Apostle Paul and other Apostles.

C. We Are Responsible To Practice The Truth! (Vs 16-17)

Our encouragement comes from God!

But God uses people to encourage one another, as well!

It isn't enough that we just know the truth...we must put it into action in our lives.

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Paul had just enlightened them concerning the '*Day of the Lord*', but they needed to apply the truth they had received.

By faith, they needed to allow God to encourage and comfort their hearts, and in turn, they were to encourage and comfort one another!

Establishment comes from practicing the truth.

a. Two areas need establishing:

1) Their Word = what they said.

2) Their Work = what they did.

b. They had been shaken because they weren't established or well-grounded in the truth.

c. It had affected what they said, and what they did as believers...their witness and their work.

Conclusion

The Day of the Lord is coming...its not upon us yet...but are you ready for it?

It will seal the fate of all who have heard, but rejected the truth of the gospel (the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ).

We now have the Truth; the door of opportunity is still open for all to be saved.

Don't be fooled by all the date setting false prophets and other false prophets! But rather, be established in the Truth!