

# 2 Thessalonians 2:1-6

## The Coming of the Antichrist

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### 2 Thessalonians 2:1-6 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, <sup>2</sup> not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. <sup>5</sup> Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? <sup>6</sup> And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.

- over the next two weeks we are going to be looking at “the man of lawlessness” or “the person of the antichrist”

- we need to be \_\_\_\_\_ as we enter into this section of 2 Thessalonians

- there is much that we cannot know and many have speculated and come up looking very \_\_\_\_\_

- Joe Carter, a pastor with the gospel coalition wrote an article on this topic called “The 7 Most Popular Contenders for the Title ‘Antichrist’”. Here are the 7 contenders:

1. **The Pope** - *The all-time most popular contender for the title of Antichrist was not any individual but an office—the Roman Catholic Papacy. Martin Luther, John Calvin, Cotton Mather, William Tyndale, and a long list of other Protestants have considered the office of the papacy to be the Antichrist.*

2. **Nicolae Jetty Carpathia** - *Carpathia is the fictional antagonist in the Left Behind book series written by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. While no one thinks Carpathia is the actual Antichrist, he is the archetype for what many believe the Antichrist would be like:*

3. **Nero Caesar** - *Many Biblical scholars believe that the number of the beast in Revelation 13:18 is a numerical reference to Emperor Nero, whose name in Greek when transliterated into Hebrew, retains the value of 666,*

4. **Hitler** - *For obvious reasons.*

5. (Tie) **Henry Kissinger / Mikhail Gorbachev** - *During the 1970s and early 1980s, the Secretary of State for the Nixon and Ford Administrations topped the “Most Likely to Be the Antichrist” lists*

6. **Napoleon** - *Tsar Alexander of Russia called Napoleon the “Anti-Christ and the enemy of God” because he liberated the Jews.*

7. (Tie) **The American President** - *Every American president since George Washington has likely been suspected of being the one to usher in the end times.*

- instead of trying to figure out the \_\_\_\_\_ of the “man of lawlessness” (often our interpretation of the man of lawlessness is dominated by our dislike for someone), we ought to interpret this section and accurately apply this section to our hearts and lives

- we need to be reminded of the \_\_\_\_\_ why Paul wrote this letter and this will help us understand this passage

1) Paul wrote this letter to \_\_\_\_\_ these Thessalonians Christians because they were being \_\_\_\_\_

- how important is encouragement when we are beaten down by difficult situations? Very Important!

2) Paul wrote this letter to deal with the \_\_\_\_\_ teaching of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus which was allegedly being attributed by Paul.

- some were teaching that the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus had already taken place

3) Paul wrote this letter to deal the ongoing issue of \_\_\_\_\_ in the congregation.

- some were teaching that “since Jesus was coming soon they did not have to work”.

- so with these issues in mind, we can now tackle this section on the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus Christ

#### Outline:

1) (2:1-2) Day of the Lord

2) (2:3-4) Doomed – the Man of Lawlessness

3) (2:5-6) Don’t You Remember

#### 1) (2:1-2) Day of the Lord

**(2:1) Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to Him,**

- Paul starts this new section out with the phrase “now concerning” which reveals that he has now changed \_\_\_\_\_

- He has switched from encouragement with regards to their persecution to encouragement and correction with regards to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus Christ

- Paul now deals with the two issues at hand

*i) the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus*

*ii) our being gathered together with \_\_\_\_\_*

- Paul teaches in the opening words of this verse that the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus is directly connected to the resurrection and/or \_\_\_\_\_ of believers

- some people \_\_\_\_\_ that there is a rapture, a gathering of believers both dead and alive, and then Jesus comes after the rapture

- but this passage would lead us to believe that when Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ returns, He will gather His people to Himself to be with the Father forever

*i) the coming of the Lord Jesus*

- the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of the Lord Jesus is a major \_\_\_\_\_ in the Thessalonian letters

- this refers to the bodily return of the Lord Jesus upon the \_\_\_\_\_
- this \_\_\_\_\_ return of the Lord Jesus means that He will be \_\_\_\_\_ to everyone who is on the earth as Revelation reminds us:  
**Revelation 1:7** Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every \_\_\_\_\_ will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the \_\_\_\_\_ will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.
- at this point Jesus will judge the living and the dead, Jesus will separate the \_\_\_\_\_ from the goats as we read in Matthew 24 and Jesus will gather His people with Him and punish those who reject the Lord Jesus
- at this 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus we will \_\_\_\_\_ our salvation to the fullest!
- we will see that we have been \_\_\_\_\_ from the wrath to come (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10)
- we will also see the punishment of the wicked  
**2 Thessalonians 1:8-10** in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, <sup>10</sup> when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have \_\_\_\_\_, because our testimony to you was believed.

*ii) our being gathered together with him*

- we will fully experience the \_\_\_\_\_ of our salvation
- note that the “being gathered” is a passive verb thus revealing to us that God will \_\_\_\_\_ us together with the Lord Jesus
- this is a wonderful \_\_\_\_\_, since Christians will escape this world of sin, hatred, pride and violence
- this is a great hope where our bodies will be obsolete and we will have full \_\_\_\_\_ in the presence of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Paul had already mentioned this hope in 1 Thessalonians and called the \_\_\_\_\_ to encourage one another with such a hope and now Paul encourages them with this hope again  
**1 Thessalonians 4:17** Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the \_\_\_\_\_ to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.
- how wonderful it will be to be away from the world that beats us down and temptations and be truly \_\_\_\_\_ in the presence of the Lord!
- our faith will be completed, praise the Lord!

**we ask you, brothers,**

- although Paul asks them this, this phrase is more of a \_\_\_\_\_
- and do you see what Paul calls them? \_\_\_\_\_
- Paul as he exhorts them, he calls them “brothers” which is a term of endearment
- what does Paul ask of them?

**(2:2) not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.**

- Paul asks them to do \_\_\_ things

i) do not be quickly shaken in your mind

- this word “\_\_\_\_\_” has the idea of being shaken by the wind, or being tossed or being thrown off balance
- here Paul is calling them not to be taken off guard with regards to what people might say or even what people might say that he (Paul the apostle) has said

- here we see that we are to be \_\_\_\_\_ in our mind about what we have been taught
- we are not to be \_\_\_\_\_ back and forth on essential truths of the faith, especially concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus

ii) do not be alarmed

- this has the idea of being inwardly aroused or \_\_\_\_\_
  - this is exactly what Jesus says to his disciples about the matters around His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
- Matthew 24:6** And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not \_\_\_\_\_, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.

- Paul is saying that they should not allow their emotions to control them, but be \_\_\_\_\_ in what Paul has already told them about the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of the Lord Jesus

- do you see what they are to \_\_\_\_\_ against?
- They are to guard against: 1) a spirit 2) spoken word 3) or a letter
- “a spirit” here refers to a claim of revelation from the Holy Spirit
- the spoken word refers to something that \_\_\_\_\_ would have preached or taught
- the letter of course refers to what Paul would \_\_\_\_\_ to them

- but Paul writes something interesting here, this phrase, “seemingly to be from us”

- we see what was going on here; the people who were teaching this \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine about the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of the Lord Jesus were telling the church that this is what Paul had said and had written

- these false teachers were spreading false ideas and \_\_\_\_\_ the church that this is what Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were teaching

- this is likely why Paul ends this book with the emphasis that he truly has written this letter

**2 Thessalonians 3:17** I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.

- we all know how this works in the real world

- how many people have their social media accounts get hacked and then all of a sudden your friend whom you have known for years and does not care about their health or yours wants to sell you some miracle smoothie or miracle supplement

- it is coming from them but you know that they have been hacked just by what was sent to you from them

- or you get messages from friends saying “it looks like you in this video”

- these are people saying that it is coming from our friends but these are hackers trying to sell stuff

- this is what was going on here in Thessalonica, people were \_\_\_\_\_ what Paul had said!

- what were they teaching? “That the day of the Lord had \_\_\_\_\_ come”

- these false teachers were teaching that Jesus had already come

- now in light of what all the Bible says about the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus, certainly no one would ever teach that

- but this false idea is something that is taught by a cult in Canada, the Jehovah’s Witnesses

- the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that in 1914 Jesus returned to the earth

## **2) (2:3-4) Doomed – the Man of Lawlessness**

**(2:3) Let no one deceive you in any way.**

- we see Paul’s great \_\_\_\_\_ for this church and the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus

- Paul does not want them to be deceived  
- we know that someone or some people were already \_\_\_\_\_ by the teaching that Jesus had already returned

- Paul's concern is for the church and that they stay \_\_\_\_\_ in their beliefs and practice  
- we see this \_\_\_\_\_ for the church by Paul in several of his letters  
- Paul had a concern for the Colossian church, that they not be carried away by bad philosophy and lose sight of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ

**Colossians 2:8** See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

**For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first,**

- the day that Paul is referring to here is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord and thus the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of the Lord Jesus  
- so although the Lord does come like a thief in the night (1 Thessalonians 5:2) and nobody knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36), we do know that the Lord will not come until there is a great \_\_\_\_\_ or as some have interpreted this phrase to mean, there is a "great falling away"

- Paul is speaking about a time in the history of the church where many who have professed Jesus Christ will no longer \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ

- it will be a time where interest in Jesus Christ will be at a ultimate low

- Jesus describes a similar situation that will happen before He comes in Matthew!

**Matthew 24:12** And because \_\_\_\_\_ will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

**and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,**

- and now we get into the description of antichrist figure  
- this person is first described as a man of \_\_\_\_\_  
- this means that this man will be a person who is \_\_\_\_\_ the law of God  
- he will \_\_\_\_\_ be advocating for obedience to God's ways or commands  
- this man is going to be promoting disobedience to God and His ways

- next this man is described as a "\_\_\_\_\_ of destruction"

- the word destruction here refers to the punishment of God

- when you are \_\_\_\_\_ this means that you have been punished by God

**(2:4) who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship,**

- this man \_\_\_\_\_ God or has no need for God  
- and he even goes further, he exalts himself against God  
- we can see that this person thinks he is all that, almost kind of like a Mr. Perfect kind of attitude  
- he \_\_\_\_\_ God and exalts himself to the point of god  
- as for worshipping God, he thinks, "why worship God when I have \_\_\_\_\_ to adore?"

**so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.**

- he will take his \_\_\_\_\_ in the temple of God  
- we are not quite sure what \_\_\_\_\_ Paul is referring to here  
- some think that this is the Old Testament temple  
- others think that the temple of God that Paul is referring to is the \_\_\_\_\_ or the people of God

- whatever the temple we know that this man of lawlessness will set himself up in a place of worship to be \_\_\_\_\_

- and finally he will \_\_\_\_\_ that he is God

- to claim to be God has to be one of the most foolish things a human can claim, but this man of lawlessness will it

- here we see this antichrist figure, he will be lawless, will be destroyed, opposes God, exalts himself against God, and proclaims to be God

- this man will be \_\_\_\_\_ as charged for idolatry and blasphemy

### 3) (2:5-6) Don't You Remember

**(2:5) Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?**

- this is our problem with this passage, we do not know what Paul had \_\_\_\_\_ to them

- if we did all these questions that are very hard to answer would be answered

- Leon Morris writes, "This passage is the most obscure and difficult in the whole of the Pauline Writings and the many gaps in our knowledge have given rise to extravagant speculations."

- although there are many \_\_\_\_\_ for us on certain things here, we know that these would not be blanks for the Thessalonians because Paul had already talked to them about these things when he was with them in \_\_\_\_\_

**(2:6) And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.**

- although Paul does not exactly say what is restraining this man of lawlessness

- we can confidently know that this man of \_\_\_\_\_, like all people, is under the sovereign control of a sovereign God

**Psalm 97:1-2** The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad! <sup>2</sup> Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

- Leon Morris writes about this verse, "what is abundantly clear is that God is over \_\_\_\_\_. NO wicked person be he Satan, be he the Man of lawlessness, be he anyone else whatever, can overstep the bounds God has appointed for him. The Man of Lawlessness will be revealed only as and when God permits. He is not to be thought of as acting in complete independence. Throughout this whole passage the thought of God's sovereignty is dominant. Evil is strong, and will wax stronger in the last times, but God's hand is in the process. Evil will not pass beyond its limits. God's purpose, not that of Satan or his henchmen, will finally be effected."

- we can have confidence in the Lord that the man of lawlessness will be revealed according to the plan and \_\_\_\_\_ of God

### Application

#### 1) Be Rooted In The Gospel And The Word Of God

- over the years that I have been a Christian I have heard many people call other people the "man of lawlessness" or the "antichrist"

- but what Paul calls these believers back to, is his teachings that he first taught them

- Paul taught them the gospel and sound doctrine

- these are the truths that we must cling to at all times

**1 Thessalonians 5:9-10** For God has not destined us for \_\_\_\_\_, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who \_\_\_\_\_ for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might \_\_\_\_\_ with him.

**Acts 17:3** explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ."

- it is very easy to get alarmed, to get shaken in mind, that is why we need to press on with the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus Christ

- because of Christ we can be brought from death to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to darkness and night to day

- Christ Jesus can wipe out our sin record completely through the grace of God and through \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ

- that \_\_\_\_\_ that we feel guilty about through Christ it is forgotten and gone

- let us be a group of believers who are \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection!

- if you are frightened about end times and do not know the Lord, today is the day that you ought to bow down and serve the Lord

- see His grace, see His \_\_\_\_\_ given, see His death for your sake and trust His work so that you can have new life and confidence in the future with the Lord!

## **2) Be Reminded Of The Glorious Hope Of Christ**

- I said this months ago and it is still true, "if we ever needed encouragement in the church it is now!"

- people are beaten down, people have been upset by this or by that!

- I talked to a police officer this week and he was shocked by how people have been acting and what he had been called

- again we are not immune to the stresses that have been brought upon society these days

- but we have a glorious \_\_\_\_\_!

- we have the hope of being gathered to Jesus Christ

- we all have faced difficult times, but we can hope in the glory of the Lord

**Revelation 21:3-4** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

- life is tough, but place your \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ and see the beauty of His grace and His glorious Hope!

- our hope is not in this earthly thing or that earthly event but in our being \_\_\_\_\_ together with the Lord Jesus for eternity!

## **3) Be On Your Guard Against False Teachers**

- the only way you can guard against \_\_\_\_\_ teachers is by being taught by God the Holy Spirit through the \_\_\_\_\_ of God

- these Christians at Thessalonica were getting bombarded with persecution and false teachers that were trying to steal their hope in the Lord Jesus Christ

- let that not be us

- let us \_\_\_\_\_ by the grace of God to keep in the \_\_\_\_\_ day by day, even if we think we do not have the time

- let us strive to be in fellowship with faithful, God fearing believers, even if we think we are strong in the Lord

- a pastor friend of mine was speaking about how he was concerned about his congregation and that they would not be able to discern \_\_\_\_\_ from error, let us not be like that

- the Bible warns us, many times, "be not deceived"

- Peter warns us

**2 Peter 3:17** You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not \_\_\_\_\_ away with the \_\_\_\_\_ of lawless people and lose your own stability.

- Jesus also warns us

**Matthew 7:15** "Beware of \_\_\_\_\_ prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous \_\_\_\_\_.

- let us be a people rooted in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ, His mercy and His Word by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit

**Prepare for next week:  
1 Thessalonians 2: 7-12**