

# 2 Thessalonians 2 Commentary

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HE HAS NOT YET COME

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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

Another [Overview Chart - 2 Thessalonians](#) - Charles Swindoll

## COMPARISON OF 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS

### 1 THESSALONIANS

Addresses how the Thessalonians were evangelized as they received the Word of God

The imminency and importance of the Lord's return is emphasized

The saints are comforted and encouraged

Paul is concerned with the church and its hope of the rapture (meeting Christ in the air)

Contains the outstanding passage on the rapture of the saints in 4:13–18

### 2 THESSALONIANS

Addresses how the Thessalonians are being edified, noting their progress in faith, love, and patience

Misunderstandings about the Lord's return are corrected

The saints are assured of God's judgment on His enemies

Paul is concerned with Satan, the man of sin (Antichrist) and their destruction at the revelation (return of Christ to the earth)

Contains the outstanding passage concerning the day of the Lord in 2:1–12

**2 Thessalonians 2:1** Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

- **we:** Ro 12:1
- **by the:** 1Th 4:14-16
- **and by:** Ge 49:10 Mt 24:31 25:32 Mk 13:27 Eph 1:10 1Th 3:13 4:17 2Ti 4:1
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE COMING AND THE GATHERING

### [Click for main commentary on 2 Thessalonians 2:1](#)

As an aside, it is notable that Paul did not hesitate to teach Bible prophecy to new converts to Christianity, clearly indicative of the importance of prophetic Scriptures as part of the whole counsel of God's Word. The tragedy in the modern evangelical church is that many churches are failing to teach Bible prophecy to their congregations, using such logic as there is too much disagreement, how can anyone know the true interpretation, it is too difficult to understand, etc, etc. Guess what? If the church does not teach Bible prophecy, then how will the saints know the truth? Sadly, the cults major in propagating their false interpretations of prophecy and instead of saints being stabilized by truth, they are shaken and confused. How many time have you heard someone say they were even afraid to read the Revelation because it is so confusing? If 20 percent of the Scriptures was prophetic when it was written, then one can see that there will be a major gap in a believer's Biblical knowledge if prophetic passages are bypassed and/or treated only superficially. This was not the apostle Paul's approach for as he wrote " Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?" (2 Thes 2:5) This begs the question dear pastor or teacher, are you instructing your flock on the things that Paul thought important to pass on to the new believers at Thessalonica?

#### **THOUGHT - Future predictive prophecy occupies 20% of Scripture.**

- One-third of this 20% is focused on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Speaks of the return to judge sinners and to reward the righteous
- ~660 general prophecies in the Bible and about 330 (50%) relate to Jesus Christ.
- Of 330 prophecies about Jesus, about 110 refer to His first coming and 220 to His Second Coming.
- There are 46 OT prophets - 10 spoke of His first coming and 36 of His Second Coming.
- Estimated that >1500 OT verses refer to the return of the Messiah in glory and judgment.
- Approximately one of every 25 NT verses relate to Christ's Second Coming.
- There are 8 NT mentions of the Second Coming for every mention of His first coming
- Our Lord referred to His Second Coming 20 times and there are over 50 warnings in the NT that He is coming again.
- UPSHOT? JESUS IS COMING! (Adapted from John MacArthur)

**Guzik** makes a good point - The challenge in understanding this chapter comes from the fact that it is a supplement to what Paul has already taught the Thessalonians in words, and we don't know exactly what Paul said to the them. Yet the ideas are clear enough if carefully pieced together.

As **Charles Ryrie** says "some Thessalonian believers thought that the [Day of the Lord](#) had already come and that they were living in it, because of the persecutions and trials through which they were passing. It is to this point, the coming or beginning of the [Day of the Lord](#), that Paul speaks in the section. He assures these believers (and us) that the Day had not yet come and would not come until certain other events occur." (EvBC-2Th)

**2 Thessalonians 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.**

- **shaken:** Isa 7:2 8:12,13 26:3 Mt 24:6 Mk 13:7 Lu 21:9,19 Joh 14:1,27 Ac 20:23,24 Eph 5:6 1Th 3:3
- **by spirit:** De 13:1-5 Jer 23:25-27 Mic 2:11 Mt 24:4,5,24 2Pe 2:1-3 1Jn 4:1,2 Rev 19:20
- **nor by letter:** 1Th 4:15 2Pe 3:4-8
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



The End of the World  
(The Great Day of His Wrath)  
John Martin

## THE NEED TO STAY SOBER MINDED

### Click for main commentary on 2 Thessalonians 2:2

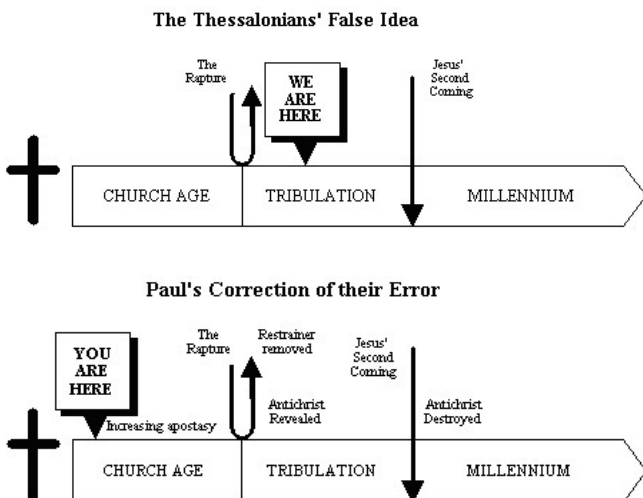
**THOUGHT** - Note that false teachers apparently popped up almost immediately after Paul left Thessalonica at the "invitation" of a mob of jealous Jews (Acts 17:5,10+). O, how we need to stay daily in the Word of Truth taught by the Spirit of Truth that we might be sanctified in Truth (Jn 17:17).

**Guzik** has an interesting observation and deduction - It is important to notice that the Thessalonians would be shaken or troubled by the thought of being in the Great Tribulation only if they had been taught by Paul that they would escape that period through the rapture. Otherwise they would, in a sense, welcome the Great Tribulation as a necessary prelude to the Second Coming. But Paul had clearly taught them that they would escape God's judgment on this earth during the period known as the [Day of the Lord](#) or the day of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:14-18).

**2 Thessalonians 2:3** Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

- **Let no one:** Mt 24:4-6 1Co 6:9 Eph 5:6
- **unless the apostasy comes first** 1Ti 4:1-3 2Ti 3:1-3 4:3,4
- **man:** 2Th 2:8-10 Da 7:25 1Jn 2:18 Rev 13:11-18
- **the son:** Joh 17:12 Rev 17:8,11
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Dr Thomas Constable** ([commentary](#) - page 20) has a depiction of the confusion of the saints at Thessalonica:



**DON'T BE DECEIVED:  
THE SIGN WILL BE CLEAR!**

## [Click for main commentary on 2 Thessalonians 2:3](#)

The two clear signs mark the coming of the [Day of the Lord](#) - (1) the (specific) **apostasy** (some have proposed this is the "departure" of the Church in the rapture, but that is a highly unlikely interpretation - see [Coombs' conclusion below](#)) and (2) revealing of the [man of lawlessness](#), the **Antichrist**. Note that while both events are in essence manifestations of rebellion against God, they are distinct, separate events. Both events will mark the beginning of the [Great Tribulation](#). Jesus could not have been much clearer in His warning in the Olivet Discourse (unless you read/interpret what He declared non-literally! See [Read Literally](#))

"Therefore when you see the [ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION](#) (THIS IS THE ULTIMATE REVEALING OF THE MAN OF LAWLESSNESS) which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. 18 "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. 21 "For then (WHEN? CONTEXT = Mt 24:15+ - COULD IT BE ANY CLEARER?) there will be a [Great Tribulation](#), such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will (HAS THE WORLD EVER SEEN SUCH AN EVENT? DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM 70 AD - YES BAD BUT FAR MORE JEWS WERE KILLED IN HITLER'S HOLOCAUST! AN HONEST, LITERAL INTERPRETATION LEAVES NO DOUBT THAT THIS GREAT TRIBULATION HAS NOT YET OCCURRED.). (Matthew 24:15-21-see commentary)

**MacArthur** on the **man of lawlessness** - Human history has had its share of evil leaders ... But one is coming who will surpass them all, both in the extent of his power and the evil of his person. He will be the most fiendish, wicked, powerful man ever to walk the earth. He is known in Scripture by many names; he is "Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal" (Ezek. 38:2); the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 24; 8:9; the "prince who is to come" (Dan. 9:26); the king who does as he pleases (Dan. 1:36); the foolish, worthless shepherd (Zech. 11:15-17); the beast (Rev. 11:7; 13:1; 14:9; 19:20; etc.).

**Hiebert** on **Antichrist's** name **man of lawlessness** - "It is not a personal name but a characterization of the man, indicating his evil character. Sin has such absolute domination over him that he seems to be the very embodiment of it. The use of the Greek term *anthrōpos* rather than *anēr* presents him as a true human being."

**Guzik** has an interesting note on the historical interpretation of this text - The most traditional understanding of this man of sin is to say that he is not an individual, but a system or an office. Historically, Protestant interpreters have seen the man of sin to be the succession of popes. Calvin thought this way: "Paul, however, is not speaking of one individual, but of a kingdom that was to be seized by Satan for the purpose of setting up a seat of abomination in the midst of God's temple. This we see accomplished in popery." However, there is no good reason to see this man of sin to be other than what the plainest meaning is here—an individual who will come to great prominence in the very last days. This was how it was understood in the earliest days of Christianity. "The fathers understood the Antichrist to be intended, but of this person they seemed to have formed no specific idea." (Clarke)

The meaning of the description **the son of destruction** is interpreted by most conservative commentaries as indicative of the one doomed to destruction (e.g., NIV translates it "the man doomed to destruction.") but some interpret this as "the one who brings destruction." (NLT translation). The excellent expositor **Hiebert** favors the former interpretation writing "It marks his certain doom. The Hebrew idiom "son of" (cf. 1 Thess. 5:5) points to his characteristic relationship. It marks him as one who "stands in the sort of relation to it that a son does to a father, and who falls under its power and domination." So completely has he fallen under the power of destruction, perdition or ruination, that he may rightly be said to belong to it by nature. Destruction denotes loss of well being, not loss of being, extinction. As the very opposite of all that is implied in salvation, it points to "an everlasting state of torment and death." It is a "destruction which consists in the loss of eternal life, eternal misery, the lot of those excluded from the kingdom of God."40 Marshall observes, "Paul introduces the phrase at the very outset of his exposition to assure his readers that God's opponent will not succeed."

**William W Coombs** asks the question in his 1998 article [Is Apostasia in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 A Reference to the Rapture?](#) - In his 25 page paper he concludes the following - The case for understanding *ajpostasiva* as the Rapture in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 has not been proven. The appeal to the translation of the word in versions prior to the King James has no merit whatsoever. While the English translation "departure" can refer to spatial departure, there is no evidence that this is the intended meaning of the word in these early versions in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. The lexical argument that *ajpostasiva* itself could have that meaning in this verse seems unlikely. The strongest argument for the Rapture view is the contextual considerations. These certainly have merit, but in my opinion do not rise to the level of probability. 'Apostasia most likely refers to a religious apostasy, and therefore its occurrence in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 should not be used as evidence for the pretribulational Rapture. ( )

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**Related Resource:**

- [Day of the Lord](#) - When does it begin? End? Includes schematic.

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**Question:** [Will there be a great apostasy / falling away during the end times?](#)

**Answer:** The Bible indicates that there will be a great **apostasy** during the end times. The “great apostasy” is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 ([notes](#)). The KJV calls it the “**falling away**,” while the NIV and ESV call it “**the rebellion**.” And that’s what an [apostasy](#) is: a rebellion, an abandonment of the truth. The end times will include a wholesale rejection of God’s revelation, a further “falling away” of an already fallen world.



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The occasion of Paul’s writing to the Thessalonians was to correct some of the errors concerning the end times that the believers had heard from false teachers. Among the falsehoods was that “**the day of the Lord has already come**” (2 Thessalonians 2:2). The Christians in Thessalonica were afraid that Jesus had already come, they had missed the [rapture](#) (ED: See also rapture), and they were now in the [tribulation](#). (ED: See also Great Tribulation) Paul had already explained the rapture to them in his first letter (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17-see notes). Paul writes his second letter to assure them that, contrary to what they had heard, and despite the persecution they were enduring, the “day of Christ” had not yet come.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3 ([notes](#)), Paul makes it clear that the day of the Lord (ED: See more detail on [Day of the Lord](#)), a time of worldwide judgment (Isaiah 13:6-notes; Obadiah 1:15), will not transpire until two things happen. First, the falling away, or great **apostasy**, must occur. Second, the “**man of lawlessness**” must be revealed, he who is called the “son of perdition,” also known as the [Antichrist](#). Once this person makes himself known, the end times will indeed have come. Numerous speculations about the identity of the man of sin, beginning in the first century, have included Caligula, Caius Caesar, Mohammed, Napoleon, and any number of Roman popes. None of them were the Antichrist.

The man of lawlessness, according to 2 Thessalonians 2:4 ([notes](#)), is the one who “will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.” Clearly, this has not yet happened; no one since Paul’s time has set himself up as God in the Jewish temple. Two thousand years have passed since the epistle was written, and the “day of the Lord” has not yet come. **Paul assures us that it will not come until the falling away comes first.**

The Greek word translated “rebellion” or “falling away” in verse 3 is [apostasia](#), from which we get the English word *apostasy*. It refers to a general defection from the true God, the Bible, and the Christian faith. Every age has its defectors, but the falling away at the end times will be complete and worldwide. The whole planet will be in rebellion against God and His Christ. Every coup requires a leader, and into this global apostasy will step the Antichrist. We believe this takes place [after the church has been raptured](#) from the earth.

Jesus warned the disciples concerning the final days in Matthew 24:10–12 (notes): “At that time many will turn away ([skandalizo](#)) from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.” These are the characteristics of the great apostasy of the end times. [GotQuestions.org](#) (Note: **notes** are added to original)

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**Question:** [Who is the man of lawlessness in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12?](#)

**Answer:** The man of lawlessness in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 is the [Antichrist](#) who will come on the world scene at the beginning of the [Day of the Lord](#). This Day, sometimes called the “end times,” starts after the [rapture](#) of the church in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11). It is good to note that the Day of the Lord is not a twenty-four-hour period of time; rather, it is an extended period of time that includes the seven-year [tribulation](#), the return of Christ to put down all rebellion against Him, the [1,000-year reign of Christ](#) (ED: see Millennium) on earth, the final defeat of Satan, and the [Great White Throne Judgment](#) ([notes](#))

The Antichrist is given the title “man of lawlessness” because he will oppose in every way the biblical God and His law. He will be completely lawless. Daniel 7:8+ speaks of this man as a “boastful” king who will “try to change the set times and the laws” (Da 7:11+)

and Da 7:25+). He will come offering a false peace to the world and will with his charismatic personality, incredible promises, and breathtaking miracles unite all nations politically, economically, and religiously under his leadership. At the same time, he will make a covenant with Israel for three and one-half years (cf. Daniel 9:27+, where “seven” indicates seven years). In the middle of the seven years, the man of lawlessness will break his covenant with Israel, stop their sacrifices (Daniel 9:27+), and enter the temple to set himself up as “god” and demand worship (2 Thessalonians 2:4-[notes](#)). This is the “[abomination that causes desolation](#)” that Jesus spoke of in Mark 13:14 ([notes](#) - Ed Note ESV translates it “where HE ought not to be” not “IT” as in other translations).

Satan works through the Antichrist, for **Satan himself is not able to become incarnate**. By possessing and controlling the Antichrist, Satan is worshiped in the temple where the biblical God is to be worshiped. No wonder the Antichrist is called the man of lawlessness. To act as “god” is the ultimate rejection of the biblical God’s character and laws.

This action of the Antichrist will cause an upheaval in his worldwide kingdom, and forces from the East will gather to fight against him. But instead of fighting each other, the forces of the world unite to fight the King of kings and Lord of lords, who comes to put down the man of lawlessness and his allies in the great [battle of Armageddon](#) (Revelation 16:16 - [notes](#); Revelation 19:19 - [notes](#)). Of course, the man of lawlessness loses that battle. He and his false prophet are then cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20-[notes](#)). The Word of God (Revelation 19:13 - [notes](#)), Jesus Christ, will be the Victor.

A quick observation of the happenings in our world today reveals that [lawlessness](#) is on the rise. Such lawlessness will continue and increase (2 Timothy 3:13 - [notes](#)), and when the man of lawlessness appears on the scene, he will be welcomed with open arms. Those who have rejected the true [Prince of Peace](#), Jesus Christ, will fall for the Antichrist’s empty promise of peace. It is vitally important that each of us is sure that we have accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and are living for Him. “Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come” (Mark 13:33 - [notes](#)). [GotQuestions.org](#) (Note: **notes** are added to original)

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## James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE “MAN OF SIN.” 2 THESSALONIANS 2:1–12

In the above verses we have a prophetic picture drawn by the inspired apostle, which demands serious attention in these days and which is also a powerful indictment against the popular doctrine that the “world will be converted” before the Coming of the Lord. Paul bases his appeal (vv. 1, 2) on the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is Coming, and that His people will be gathered together unto Him on that day. Then gives the warning against being “shaken in mind” or “troubled” because of false teaching concerning His Coming. But His appearing is certain; so also is the appearing of that “Man of Sin” (v. 3).

I.—The Time of His Appearing. Two conditions precede “The Day of Christ.” First, there will be a “falling away” from the faith, then the revelation of that “Man of Sin.” This falling away must mean the apostasy of the Church in the denial of those truths once believed or consented to. No one can fall away from where they have never been. The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, etc. (1 Tim. 4:1–3). “The mystery of iniquity,” or, rather, lawlessness, is always in evidence (v. 7). This is the spirit of Antichrist, which even now already is in the world (1 John 4:3), and in these days abundantly manifest in midst of much preaching and Bible distribution. Lawlessness, which is the practical denial of Divine and Spiritual authority, is a congenial moral condition for the appearing and work of this “Man of Sin.” The fulness of the time for his manifestation may be near (2 Peter 2:1, 2).

II. His Character. He is called “the son of perdition” (v. 3). As Jesus, the Son of God, was the embodiment of the Divine character, so the “son of perdition” seems to be the human embodiment of the satanic character, for “His coming will be after the working of Satan” (v. 9). He is also called “that wicked one,” whom the Lord will consume with the “brightness of His Coming” (v. 8). Does this imply that sin and lawlessness will yet find its culmination in a person, a man of the world, energised by satanic power, believed in, and followed by a restless, sceptical, and Christ-defiant populace, making their last united attempt to overthrow the faith that was “once for all delivered unto the saints?”

III. His Purpose. Is to oppose everything that belongs to God, and His Christ and to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped (v. 4). Thus showing himself to be “the Antichrist” “Exalting himself,” this was the sin of Satan at the beginning, but by becoming incarnate in the “Man of Sin,” will surely be his last device to seduce a gullible humanity. He has always been the “Deceiver of the whole world.” If Satan hopes to succeed by this blasphemous pretention of being himself above “all that is called godly,” it certainly reveals something of the terrible depths into which humanity has fallen by this departure from the truth. Beware of self-seeking and self-exaltation, it savours of the “Man of Sin.” “He that exalteth himself shall be abased.” “Not I, but Christ.” is the only absolutely safe attitude.

IV. His Methods. They are varied and mighty. “With all power and signs,” and “lying wonders,” with all “deceivableness of unrighteousness” (vv. 9, 10). That is, with every wicked device agreeable to those who are on their way to perdition. This “Man of Sin” looks like the beast that is to come out of the earth with the power (horns) of a lamb, and the passion and purpose of a dragon; and who is able to make fire come down from heaven in the sight of men (Rev. 13:11–13). We have often thought of the “wiles of

the devil" in relation to our individual life, but here is a "Man of Sin," the offspring of perdition (v. 3), endowed with the power of Satan, worshipped as God, and leading to the eternal abyss the multitudes of those who "have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved" (v. 10). The wonders of the truth were rejected for "lying wonders."

V. His Hinderer. There is One who is a Hinderer to his diabolical mission. "He that hindereth will hinder, until He be taken out of the way" (v. 7).

1. WHO IS HE? This hinderer is not a system, or party, but a Person. He must be mighty and Divine to resist such powerful and delusive work. Who can He be but the Holy Spirit of God, who is still striving with men, and leading many to Jesus Christ.

2. HOW DOES HE HINDER? By opening the blinded eyes of sinners to see their need of a Saviour. By revealing to them the things that are Christ's for their salvation. By guiding them into the truth which satisfies and fortifies against the "wiles of the Devil."

3. WHEN SHALL HE BE TAKEN OUT OF THE WAY?" Surely when the Church of God is taken away from the world, as in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The Church, as the Redeemed Body of Christ, is presently the "temple of the Holy Ghost." When He is taken away with the Church, then shall He cease to "strive with men." Then who shall hinder Satan in his work of deception and spiritual destruction? "If the salt lose its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?"

VI. His Temporary Ally. For once we see God adding His influence to crown Satan's efforts with success. What an awful crisis this is. The people have rejected His truth that was given to save them (v. 10). "For this cause He sent them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (v. 11), because they would not believe the truth (v. 12). Thus making their condemnation doubly sure. Brethren, what shall we say to these things? God is not to be mocked. When Israel would not hearken to His voice He gave them up to their own hearts' lusts (Psa. 81:11, 12). In the reign of the coming "Man of Sin," when men's spiritual indifference has turned into God-defiance, and God's longsuffering mercy turned into loathing and vengeance, then what shall the end be? (1 Thess 1:8)

VII. His Destruction. The Lawless One, "whom the Lord will sweep away with the tempest of His anger, and utterly overwhelm by the awful splendour of His Coming" (v. 8). Those who have been dazzled and bewitched, and awe-stricken by the lying wonders of this Satanic "man," will be smitten with terrible confusion before the "BRIGHTNESS of His Coming." "They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with power and GREAT GLORY" (Matt. 24:30). The glory of that "Man of Sin" will be discovered as a delusive will-o-the-wisp in the Presence of the glorious effulgence of the Man Christ Jesus. But there will be those at His Coming who shall say: "Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him. He will save us, and we will rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25:9). "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

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## CHRISTIAN WARNING 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 - Croft Pentz

### I. THE SIGNS—vv. 1-12

1. Problem—vv. 1-2. Some had thought that the Lord had already come. Man should not set dates. No one knows when He will come.

2. Person—v. 3. The Antichrist will be revealed. There would be a falling away, backsliding from God. Later the Antichrist will have power.

3. Pride—v. 4. People will worship the Antichrist. He will have power to do wonders—Revelation 13:8.

4. Prophecy—vv. 5-6. When the time is ready, the Antichrist will reveal himself.

5. Plan—vv. 7-8. The Antichrist will be at work before Christ returns. His power will be greater after the Christians and the Holy Spirit are removed.

6. Power—vv. 9-10. He will have power to deceive and lead many people astray.

7. Peril—vv. 11-12. People will believe the Antichrist, though he is a man of many lies.

### II. THE STEADFASTNESS—vv. 13-15

1. Salvation—v. 13. Salvation is the start of establishing us in the Lord's way.

2. Sharing—v. 14. After salvation, we share with others what Christ has done for us. Christ means more to us when we share Him with others.

3. Standing—v. 15. Stand for the teachings of God's Word. Paul asks the people to accept him and his word, since he was giving God's Word.

### III. THE SURETY—vv. 16-17

1. Consolation—v. 16. We have hope in Christ. The word "hope" here means, confidence, trust, faith.

2. Comfort—v. 17. The Lord will comfort us in all ways. Comfort ourselves in the fact that CHRIST IS COMING.

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## 2 Thessalonians 2:3

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.

Using this verse for support Mormons claim that there was a total falling away from Christianity early in church history. With no true church left on earth, it was necessary for Joseph Smith to restore Christianity early in the 1800s, they assert. However, they are reading into 2 Thessalonians 2:3 more than the verse actually says; it does not say that the falling away would be complete.

In fact, this teaching of a complete apostasy contradicts other Mormon teachings, such as the claim that three faithful Nephite disciples never died (3 Nephi 28:1–8) and the belief that the apostle John never died (Doctrine and Covenants 7:1–8). If those four believers remained, it could not be said that Christianity vanished from the earth.

Aside from those contradictory claims within Mormonism itself, what other evidence exists that there was never a complete and total falling away from Christianity that eliminated the Church from this planet? Believers in Jesus Christ will accept as strong evidence his promise that he would be with those taught “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:20). There would have to be some on earth following Jesus’ teachings always, from the time of Christ to the end of the world. (Mormons Answered Verse by Verse)

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### Related Resource:

- [Who is the son of perdition? \(THE SON OF DESTRUCTION\) | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Thessalonians 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.**

- **and exalts:** Isa 14:13 Eze 28:2,6,9 Da 7:8,25 8:9-11 11:36 Rev 13:6
- **so-called:** 1Co 8:5
- **he takes his seat :** Da 8:12-14 11:45 Rev 13:6,7
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**[Click for main commentary on 2 Thessalonians 2:4](#)**

**Guzik on The temple of God:** That this is a literal temple is clear from the text, and has been understood as such by even the earliest Christians. “But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for **three years and six months**, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom.” ([Irenaeus](#), writing in the **late second century**) The specific ancient Greek word for **temple** ([naos](#)) indicates the **most holy place** and not the temple as a whole. “It is not that he enters the temple precincts: he invades the most sacred place and there takes his seat. His action is itself a claim to deity.” (Morris) This is the ultimate blasphemy that results in certain judgment, the [abomination of desolation](#) spoken of by both Daniel and Jesus. The prophet Daniel told us the Antichrist will break his covenant with the Jews and bring sacrifice and offerings to an end; that the Antichrist will defile the temple by setting something abominable there (Daniel 9:27, Da 11:31+, and Da 12:11+). Jesus said to look for an [abomination](#) standing in the holy place, which would be the pivotal sign that the season of God’s wrath was upon the earth (Matthew 24:15–16+ and Mt 24:21+). “Any man may be satisfied that St. Paul alluded to Daniel’s description, because he has not only borrowed the same ideas, but has even adopted some of the phrases and expressions.” (Clarke)

Showing himself that he is God: The man of sin is truly an Anti-Christ. Satan has planned the career of the man of sin to mirror the ministry of Jesus.

- Both Jesus and the man of sin have a coming (2 Thessalonians 2:1 and 2:9).
- Both Jesus and the man of sin are revealed (2 Thessalonians 1:7 and 2:3).
- Both Jesus and the man of sin have a gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:10–11).
- Both Jesus and the man of sin say that they alone should be worshipped (2 Thessalonians 2:4).
- Both Jesus and the man of sin have support for their claims by miraculous works (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

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**Question:** [What is the abomination of desolation?](#)



**Answer:** The phrase “**abomination of desolation**” refers to Matthew 24:15+ (KJV): “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand.” This is referring to Daniel 9:27, “He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.” In 167 B.C. a Greek ruler by the name of [Antiochus Epiphanies](#) set up an altar to Zeus over the altar of burnt offerings in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. He also sacrificed a pig on the altar in the Temple in Jerusalem. This event is known as the abomination of desolation.

In Matthew 24:15+, Jesus was speaking some 200 years after the abomination of desolation described above had already occurred. So, Jesus must have been prophesying that some time in the future another abomination of desolation would occur in a Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Most Bible prophecy interpreters believe that Jesus was referring to the Antichrist who will do something very similar to what Antiochus Epiphanies did. This is confirmed by the fact that some of what Daniel prophesied in Daniel 9:27+ did not occur in 167 B.C. with Antiochus Epiphanies. Antiochus did not confirm a covenant with Israel for seven years. It is the Antichrist who, in the end times, will establish a covenant with Israel for seven years and then break it by doing something similar to the abomination of desolation in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem.

Whatever the future abomination of desolation is, it will leave no doubt in anyone’s mind that the one perpetrating it is the person known as the Antichrist. Revelation 13:14+ describes him making some kind of image which all are forced to worship. Turning the temple of the living God into a place of worship for the Antichrist is truly an “abomination.” Those who are alive and remain during the tribulation should be watchful and recognize that this event is the beginning of 3.5 years of the worst of the tribulation period (ED: Aka The Great Tribulation) and that the return of the Lord Jesus is imminent. “Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36). [GotQuestions.org](#)

## 2 Thessalonians 2:5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

Phillips Translation I expect you remember now how I talked about this when I was with you.

- **Remember:** Mt 16:9 Mk 8:18 Lu 24:6,7 Ac 20:31
- **while:** 2Th 3:10 Joh 16:4 Ga 5:21 1Th 2:11 2Pe 1:15
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE VALUE OF SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

[Click for main commentary on 2 Thessalonians 2:5](#)

**Guzik** - Paul was only with the Thessalonians a few weeks (Acts 17:1–10). But Paul thought it important to teach these brand new Christians about Biblical prophecy, and he taught them in some detail.

#### Related Resources:

- [Memorizing His Word](#)
- [Memory Verses by Topic](#)

## 2 Thessalonians 2:6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed.

Phillips Translation You will probably also remember how I used to talk about a "restraining power" which would operate until the time should come for the emergence of this man.

- **you know what restrains,** 2Th 2:7
- **he will be revealed:** 2Th 2:3,8
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE ANTICHRIST RESTRAINED

**And you know what** ("the thing that" ) **restrains** (what is keeping down) **him now** - First note that Paul says the saints at Thessalonica **know** what restrains the man of lawlessness, clearly indicating that Paul had previously taught them this truth. The verb for **know** is **eido** which means to know beyond a shadow of a doubt. Second, note the verb **restrains** or holds back is in the present tense indicating this is an active process, on going even as Paul wrote (and on going even today).

**Swindoll on restrains him now** - I take the view that the restraining power is the Holy Spirit working primarily through the church in the world. Today, the Holy Spirit restrains the world's lawlessness chiefly through the church. His presence in believers shines as the light of the world and permeates secular culture as the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13-16+). When the church is taken to be with Christ in the air (1 Thes. 4:16-17+), the children of light will be removed from the world of darkness, leaving a pitch-black night (cf. 1 Thes. 5:4-8+). In the resulting darkness, every vestige of goodness will evaporate; every remnant of truth will unravel. (Insights on 1 & 2 Thessalonians) (**Gotquestions** seems to agree closest with Swindoll's interpretation - see [Who / What is the restrainer in 2 Thessalonians 2:6?](#)).

**John MacArthur** has a different interpretation on **what restrains him now** - While the Thessalonians already had been taught and thus knew what was restraining the coming of the Antichrist, Paul does not say specifically in this letter; thus many suggestions have been made to identify the restraining force of vv. 6, 7. These include: 1) human government; 2) preaching of the gospel; 3) the binding of Satan; 4) the providence of God; 5) the Jewish state; 6) the church; 7) the Holy Spirit; and 8) Michael. Whatever now restrains the Antichrist of 2 Th 2:3, 4, 8-10 from being revealed in the fullness of his apostasy and evil, must be more than human or even angelic power. The power that holds back Satan from bringing the final apostasy and unveiling of his Satan-possessed false Christ must be divinely supernatural. **It must be God's power in operation that holds back Satan, so that the man of sin,** the son of destruction, won't be able to come until God permits it by removing the restraining power. The reason for the restraint was so that Antichrist would be revealed at God's appointed time and no sooner, just as was Christ (cf. Gal 4:4), because God controls Satan. ([MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

**Steven Cole** adds that "MacArthur (Commentary, pp. 278-279) understands it to be the Holy Spirit, but not removed with the rapture of the church (which he understands to happen before the tribulation). Rather, he argues that the Holy Spirit will continue His restraining work until the middle of the tribulation, when He will cease that work, allowing the man of lawlessness free reign during the last half of the tribulation." ([Lesson 4: God's Comfort in an Evil World](#))

As you can see from the preceding two well-known expositors disagree on the identity of the restrainer. In his sermon Steven Cole summarizes it this way "The bottom line is, with all of these different interpretations about the restrainer, we can only be tentative. But to use these verses to argue for a pre-tribulation rapture of the church (Swindoll's view above) is to read that view into the text. Even MacArthur (who holds to the pretribulation rapture) does not interpret it that way. What we can know from this text is that God sovereignly determines when the restrainer is removed so that the man of lawlessness will be revealed. Biblical prophecy is not a matter of God's merely foreseeing what will happen, but rather of His predetermining what will happen."

**So that** - Term of purpose.

**In his time** - **Time** is not **chronos** but **kairos** a fixed period of time marked by suitability, and this is like a season in which (rotten) fruit will grow. God is in total control of all time (even though often it does not appear that way). In His infinite wisdom and by His sovereign omnipotence He has allotted a "season of sin" for the "man of sin" to reign supreme. That is "his time," and it is a very short time (relative to eternity), for it will coincide with the time Jesus referred to as the **Great Tribulation**, a 3.5 year (1260 days, 42 months, "time, times and half a time" - see [synonymous time phrases](#); cp Rev 17:10 = "he must remain **a little while**.") season when God will allow fallen man (and the fallen angel Lucifer) to do what he has always wanted to do and that is to the god of this world. It will become obvious that "man's best" is actually the worst rulership the earth has ever experienced. But the good news is that the Greek word **kairos** indicates this evil time will have an end, the "season" of the Antichrist being abruptly terminated by the return of the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:11-21-read [commentary](#)) which Paul describes in 2 Th 2:8!

**He will be revealed** - This is a prophetic promise that is absolutely sure to occur. When the Antichrist is **revealed**, God will "take the lid off" so to speak and make it obvious to all that this is the man Scripture refers to as the Antichrist. He will take center stage in world history. He will have his "moment in the sun," which will be eclipsed in a moment by the Son (2 Th 2:8) and his throne will be darkened (Rev 16:10+)! "*History*" is still *HIS* story, and the "history" of the Antichrist is but an exclamation mark signifying that this present evil age (Gal 1:4+) is about to be terminated and the next age, the age of Messiah, is about to commence! **Maranatha!** **Amen!** Come quickly! (Rev 22:20+)

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**Restrains** (2722) (**katecho** from **katá** = intensifies meaning + **écho** = have, hold) means to retain whether by avoiding the

relinquishing of something. It was used literally of holding one to keep them from going (as in Luke 4:42). **Katecho** was used figuratively with the idea of restraining or keeping someone (Antichrist) from exercising power (see 2Thes 2:6-7). A closely related figurative use of **katecho** means to hold down or suppress as the ungodly do to the truth about God (see note Romans 1:18).

**Time** (season, opportunity, proper time) (2540)(**kairos**) means a point of time or period of time, time, period, frequently with the implication of being especially fit for something and without emphasis on precise chronology. It describes the period as especially appropriate and favorable (the right time). Stated another way **kairos** is distinguished from **chronos** (time) because **kairos** views TIME from the aspect of the strategic opportunity it provides, and not simply a change from the past into the present into the future, not mere duration. (**Trench**) Something that lasts for a season and so is transient, temporary or enduring only for a specific period of time. Kairos is a period which is especially appropriate - a favorable time (at the right time).

**Will be revealed** (601)(**apokalupto** from **apó** = from + **kalúpto** = cover, conceal, English = apocalypse - see of **apokalupsis** ) literally means to remove the cover from and so the idea is to remove that which conceals something. Almost all of the NT uses have a figurative use, especially to some aspect of spiritual truth that was heretofore hidden but now has the "lid removed" so that it can be seen (understood). Thus **apokalupto** means to "take the lid off", to remove the cover and thereby to expose to open view that which had heretofore not been visible, known or disclosed. The idea is to make manifest something previously secret or unknown. **Apokalupto** conveys the idea of "taking the lid off" and means to remove the cover and expose to open view that which was heretofore not visible, known or disclosed. It means to make manifest or reveal a thing previously secret or unknown. It describes removing of a veil (an unveiling) or covering thus exposing to open view what was concealed.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.

Phillips Translation Evil is already insidiously at work but its activities are restricted until what I have called the "restraining power" (of God) is removed.

- **the mystery of lawlessness:** 1Ti 3:16 Rev 17:5,7
- **is already at work:** Ac 20:29 Col 2:18-23 2Ti 2:17,18 1Jn 2:18 4:3
- **he who now restrains:** 2Th 2:6
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For** - Term of explanation. Explains the lawlessness what will reach its height in the Antichrist, is already present.

**The mystery of lawlessness is already at work**- **The mystery of lawlessness** is continually being energized (**energeo** in the present tense - continually) in this age (just look at the news in 2020 if you doubt this!). **Mystery** (**musterion**) does not mean *mysterious* but is used in the NT to describe that which is divinely being made known. In a word, our Sovereign, Omnipotent Creator is allowing this "**mystery**" to be energized in this **present evil age** (Gal 1:4+). Make no mistake that our trustworthy God is still on His Throne and is still in complete control of the final unfolding of His divine plan of redemption, a plan which includes this last, short gasp of man grasping to be "God for a day," so to speak (note that the meaning of Antichrist is instead of Christ [see [note above](#)] and opposed to Christ!)

**Lewis** - There were already forces of lawlessness that were struggling to move forward even in Paul's day. These could be identified as the doctrines and practices that the Antichrist would later embody. What is the mystery that is revealed here? Although lawlessness has always been known, what was not clear was that someday this "spirit of lawlessness" would become incarnate in the man of lawlessness (also see 1 Jn 2:18; 4:3).

The apostle John presents a truth that parallels the **mystery of lawlessness** writing

By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is **the spirit of the antichrist**, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. 4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome (**nikao** in perfect tense = in this context means conquerors forever!) them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:2-4+)

Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that **antichrist is coming**, even now **many antichrists have appeared**; from this we know that it is the last hour. (1 John 2:18+)

**Only he who now restrains** (**katecho** in present tense) **will do so until he is taken out of the way**- Who is "he?" I agree with Swindoll (see [above](#)) the only one with the power to hold down the deluge of lawlessness and the appearance of the son of

lawlessness is the Omnipotent Holy Spirit. And when His presence and power in Christ's **Spirit Filled Church** is removed from planet earth, the gates of Hades are temporarily opened to unleash a flood of evil the magnitude of which the world has never seen nor will ever see again!

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, if you are not yet safe in the "Ark" (in Christ), then may God's Spirit move in your heart to draw you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved and Jesus will rescue you **"from the wrath that is to come."** (1 Th 1:10+).

**William MacDonald** - The Holy Spirit will, we believe, leave the world in the same sense in which He came at Pentecost—that is, as the abiding Indweller of the church and of each believer. He will still be in the world, convicting people of sin and leading them to saving faith in Christ. His removal at the Rapture does not mean that no one will be saved during the Tribulation. Of course they will (cf Rev 7:14+). But these people will not be members of the church, but rather the subjects of Christ's glorious kingdom. [Believer's Bible Commentary](#)

The Holy Spirit's influence through Jesus' followers will be removed but the omnipresent Holy Spirit will still be present on earth during [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#) and He will be active in causing countless numbers to be born again in the last horrible 3.5 years of the **great tribulation** when the Antichrist is ruthlessly ruling and death is rampant. How do we know the Spirit will be on earth and will be active in this horrible time? John writes in Revelation 7

After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude which no one could count**, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; 10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen." 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "**These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?**" 14 I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.** (Revelation 7:9-14+).

**Comment** - In short the irony is that when God allows the Antichrist to do his worst, the Spirit of Christ will do His best and will regenerate **a great multitude which no one could count** from all the people of the earth! One cannot help but recall the great attribute of our Great God Who in the midst of wrath remembers mercy! (cf Hab 3:2+).

**F. F. Bruce** writes "The **restrainer** has not yet been removed, therefore the man of lawlessness has not yet appeared, and *a fortiori*, the [Day of the Lord](#) has not yet arrived."

**Mystery** (3466)([mysterion](#) from **mustes** = one initiated [as into the Greco-Roman "mystery" religions] from **mueo** = to close or shut) in the NT is a truth never previously known, and a truth which human intellect could never discover, but one which has now been made known by divine revelation. It is previously hidden truth now divinely revealed, not mysterious (like English) never used of "mystical" or "mysterious" outside range of unassisted natural apprehension. A mystery is a truth which man cannot know by his natural powers, so that if it is known it must be revealed. **Mysterion** was used as a religious technical term in the cults of the Greco-Roman world, a religious secret confided only to the initiated, NT uses - Matt. 13:11; Mk. 4:11; Lk. 8:10; Rom. 11:25; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 4:1; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 14:2; 1 Co. 15:51; Eph. 1:9; Eph. 3:3; Eph. 3:4; Eph. 3:9; Eph. 5:32; Eph. 6:19; Col. 1:26; Col. 1:27; Col. 2:2; Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 17:5; Rev. 17:7

**Lawlessness** (458)([anomia](#) from **a** = negates what follows + **nomos** = law) literally describes that which is without the law and signifies, not merely the abstract idea, but disregard for, or actual breach of, the law of God. **Anomia** means "no law," and emphasizes an attitude of disregard for the statutes of God. It means living as if there were no law. A person who rejects God's authority doesn't care what God thinks about his habits. **Lawlessness** is living as though your own ideas are superior to God's. **Lawlessness** says, "God may demand it but I don't prefer it." **Lawlessness** says, "God may promise it but I don't want it." **Lawlessness** replaces God's law with my contrary desires. I become a law to myself. **Lawlessness** is rebellion against the right of God to make laws and govern His creatures. **Lawlessness** signifies everything that is contrary to the will and law of God and is more intentional and flagrant sin. It is direct and open rebellion against God and His ways. **Lawlessness** describes one who has the quality of not being regulated by, restrained by or controlled by law. It is one who is not governed by nor obedient to laws and who is thus

unbridled and uncontrolled in general.

**Work** (1754) (**energeo** from **en** = in + **érgon** = work. English = energetic) means to work effectively to cause something to happen. To energize, to operate, to work effectually in. It means power in exercise, and is used only of superhuman power. To work energetically, effectively and/or efficiently. To put forth energy. To be at work. To produce results. **Energeo** describes active, efficient, effective working. Paul is saying that the power of God's word exerts effective, energetic power in believers. This activity put forth in an individual energizes him to the doing of certain things intended by the one who is doing the energizing. **Energeo** in the NT virtually always describes supernatural activity,

**Restrains** (2722) see above on [katecho](#)

The following charts are from Steve Lewis ( [2 Thessalonians 2:8-12](#) ) (I agree with his analysis that the Spirit is the Restrainer)

FACT	IMPLICATION
1. The restrainer is referred to using both the neuter and masculine genders.	Biblical evidence must be sought for a single entity that is referred to using both genders in Scripture. Personhood is implied in the use of the masculine gender.
2. The restrainer existed and was actively restraining in Paul's day, as well as throughout subsequent human history (until a future time when he will be "taken out of the way").	The restrainer must have continuity of existence throughout this time period (if not actual eternity).
3. The restrainer has the authority to dictate, control, and direct the events of human history.	The restrainer must have the ability to decree and to sovereignly bring events to pass.
4. The restrainer is powerful enough to hold back mighty spiritual forces, including the most powerful created spirit being (Satan -- see 2 Th 2:9).	The restrainer must have supernatural strength and energy (if not actual omnipotence) in order to hold back powerful spirit beings.
5. The restrainer holds back lawlessness everywhere at once on a global scale.	A single personal restrainer would need to possess the attributes of omnipresence and omniscience to carry out this ministry.
6. The restrainer must maintain the highest standards of godliness and holiness in restraining the spirit of lawlessness during this time period.	The restrainer must have the attribute of absolute holiness in order to accomplish this task.

THE SOLUTION: GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT	
REQUIREMENT	MET by the HOLY SPIRIT
1. Referred to using both the neuter and masculine genders.	neuter and masculine genders. John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14
2. Continuity of existence or eternity.	Heb 9:14
3. Ability to sovereignly bring events to pass.	events to pass. Acts 8:29; 11:12; 13:2; 16:6-7; 1 Cor 12:11
4. Supernatural power or omnipotence.	Job 33:4; Rom 15:13, 19

5. Omnipresence and omniscience	Ps 139:7-8; 1 Cor 2:10-11
6. Absolute holiness.	Ps 143:10; Isa 63:10; Rom 1:4

**Question:** [What is the mystery of iniquity?](#)

**Answer:** The phrase *the mystery of iniquity* occurs in the KJV of [2 Thessalonians 2:7](#), “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.” Other translations render the phrase as “the secret power of lawlessness” (NIV) or “the mystery of lawlessness” (ESV and NASB). Before we attempt to interpret the meaning of this phrase, let’s look at the context of the passage in question:

*Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God. Don’t you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For **the secret power of lawlessness** is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness (2 Thessalonians 2:1–12, emphasis added).*

Paul’s intent in this passage is to correct a false teaching that was being propagated, namely, that the [Day of the Lord](#) (the end times’ judgment) had already come and the Christians of Thessalonica had been left behind to endure it. Paul wants to set the record straight about Christ’s return and our gathering together to Him—the rapture. Paul states that the two events that go before the [Day of the Lord](#) are the apostasy (or “the rebellion”) and the revelation of the man of lawlessness (the Antichrist). The “mystery of iniquity” that will one day culminate in the appearance of the Antichrist is already at work in the world, but it is being restrained for now so that the world is not as evil as it could be (but will be, once the Restrainer is removed from the world).

What is the apostasy? The Greek word *apostasia* in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 means “departure, falling away, defection, revolt.” This end times’ apostasy is the mass “falling away” of people from God as the world prepares to receive the lawless one who claims to be God (verse 4). It is an unprecedented, worldwide revolt against all things godly, and even many who claim to be Christians will be caught up in it. Another possibility, espoused by a small minority of scholars, is that the “apostasy” is the “departure” of the church from the world, that is, the rapture that Paul alludes to in verse 1 and which he had previously discussed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18. It is important to note that a pre-trib interpretation does not require equating *apostasia* with the rapture.

Who is this man of lawlessness? He is a literal person, often referred to as the Antichrist. He will be Satan’s henchman, a pseudo-Christ who will perform miracles, signs, and wonders by the power of Satan and ultimately deceive the world. John wrote that many antichrists will precede the coming of the ultimate Antichrist (1 John 2:18), referred to as “the beast” in Revelation 13:1–10, “the little horn” in Daniel 7:8, and “the king who does as he pleases” in Daniel 11:36.

The mystery of iniquity is already at work in the world. The forces that would bring the Antichrist to power are eager to establish his unholy kingdom, but they are currently being restrained (2 Thessalonians 2:6–7). What or who is the Restrainer? Possibilities include the Holy Spirit, the church, human governments, and angels. The Thessalonians knew the identity of the Restrainer, so Paul did not elaborate (verse 6). We believe the best answer is that the Holy Spirit is the Restrainer. The Spirit convicts the world and indwells the church, enabling God’s people to be a limiting influence on the world’s evil. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the world is right now thwarting the revelation of the man of lawlessness. Wickedness gets no traction in seizing global power—but this will change. Upon the departure of the church from this earth (at which time the Holy Spirit’s indwelling presence will depart), the mystery of iniquity will have free rein, and the tribulation on earth will begin (Matthew 24).

What exactly is the mystery of iniquity (KJV) or the secret power of lawlessness (NIV) that is being restrained by the Holy Spirit? The word *mystery* denotes something hidden for a time before God chooses to reveal it. Some “mysteries” revealed in the New

Testament include the doctrine of the Gentile church (Romans 16:25–27; Ephesians 3:4–12; Colossians 1:25–27) and the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51–52). This particular “mystery” in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 concerns the working of lawlessness in the world, leading to a worldwide rebellion against God. It works in secret right now, but it is working. The revelation of this lawlessness will coincide with the revelation of the Antichrist, mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:8. The man of sin’s rise to power will represent a climax of lawlessness, a satanic movement against the administration of God. This secret, behind-the-scenes movement is as yet restrained but waiting to be revealed.

The mystery of iniquity has been at work for a long time—since Paul’s day—and, when it finally erupts in all its hideousness, the world will be shaken to its core. The Antichrist, who leads the descent into lawlessness, will set a new standard of depravity. The enormity of the acts of moral monsters such as Stalin, Hitler, Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Robespierre, and Caligula will pale in comparison to the evil of the Antichrist.

Believers have the privilege of helping restrain the mystery of iniquity even as they look for their blessed hope, the Savior, Jesus Christ. At His second coming, Jesus will reign as the [King of kings and the Lord of lords](#). By the breath of His mouth, He will destroy the works of the enemy. The Antichrist will have “his power . . . taken away and completely destroyed forever” (Daniel 7:26). [GotQuestions.org](#)

## **2 Thessalonians 2:8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;**

Phillips Translation When that happens the lawless man will be plainly seen - though the truth of the Lord Jesus spells his doom, and the radiance of the coming of the Lord Jesus will be his utter destruction.

Wuest - And then shall the Lawless One be disclosed [in his true identity], whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth and render inoperative by the sudden appearance of His personal presence,

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:8 κα τ τε ποκαλυφθ σεται νομος, ν κ ριος [ ησο ς] νελε τ πνε ματι το σ ματος α το κα καταργ σει τ πιφανε τ ς παρουσ ας α το ,

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will destroy by the breath of his mouth and wipe out by the manifestation of his arrival.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:8 Then the man of lawlessness will be revealed, but the Lord Jesus will kill him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:8 κα τ τε ποκαλυφθ σεται νομος, ν κ ριος [ ησο ς] νελε τ πνε ματι το σ ματος α το κα καταργ σει τ πιφανε τ ς παρουσ ας α το ,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and then shall be revealed the Lawless One, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the manifestation of his presence,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming;

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His mouth and will bring him to nothing with the brightness of His coming.

- **Then that lawless one:** 2Th 2:3 Mt 13:19,38 1Jn 2:13 3:12 5:18
- **whom the Lord will slay:** Da 7:10,11,26 Rev 18:8-10 19:20 20:10
- **with the breath of His mouth** Job 4:9 Ps 18:15 Isa 11:4 Ho 6:5 Rev 1:16 Rev 2:16 19:15,20,21
- **by the appearance of His coming** 2Th 1:8,9 Heb 10:27
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passage:

Revelation 19:15+ **From His mouth comes a sharp sword**, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

Revelation 2:16+ 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

Psalms 18:15+ Then the channels of water appeared, And the foundations of the world were laid bare At Your rebuke, O LORD, **At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils**

Psalms 33:6+ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, **And by the breath of His mouth all their host.**

## THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE ANTICHRIST

**Then** - [expression of time](#) - see discussion of [then](#). This conjunction indicates progression in a narrative and in this context specifically indicates sequence of events. In this case Paul has just said the spiritual/divine restraint will be removed, and the "lid comes off" revealing to the world the Antichrist. While there is a sense in which he will likely be known at the beginning of the Seven Year "Tribulation," (cf Rev 6:2+, Da 9:27a+) his lawlessness will not become obvious until 2 Th 2:3-4 and Mt 24:15+ take place. Then it will be very clear what his character and his agenda are for the world!

**That lawless (anomos) one will be revealed (apokalupto)** - Will identifies this as prophecy. Be indicates it is passive voice, almost certainly the divine passive as God is sovereign over the timing of his revelation. The **man of lawlessness** (2 Th 2:3) is rightly described as the **lawless one**, the one who behaves as if there were no divine laws. The only laws he will acknowledge are his own "lawless" laws! **W E Vine** says of Greek word for **lawless (anomos)** "the thought is not simply that of doing what is unlawful, but of flagrant defiance of the known will of God." That would be a good description of the Antichrist who defiantly "opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God." (2 Th 2:4+, cf Da 11:36-37+ where "the king" = Antichrist). Just as Jesus will be revealed ([apokalupsis](#)) from Heaven (2 Th 1:7+), the Antichrist will be revealed ([apokalupto](#)) on earth (2Th 2:3, 2Th 2:6)

**Lewis** - Notice the passive voice (be revealed) -- an external force will do the revealing of the man of lawlessness. He will not reveal himself, but God will permit Satan to unveil him and energize him (see 2 Th 2:9). ([2 Thessalonians 2:8-12](#))

**Whom the Lord will slay (anaireo) with the breath of His mouth** - Notice that there is a **prophetic time gap** (cf time gap) of 3.5 years between the revelation of the lawless one and the slaying of the lawless one by the Lord. In a very real sense, this event is also fulfillment of the prophetic principle in Daniel 2:21 that "He (GOD) Who changes the times and the epochs (IS ALSO); He (WHO) removes kings and establishes kings." The "king" that will be removed is the Antichrist, while the King Who will be established is the Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords (Ps 2:8, Da 7:14, Da 7:27, Da 2:34, 35, 44 = "great mountain" becomes a "kingdom"). While Paul says the Lord Jesus Christ **will slay** the Antichrist, the passage in Rev 19:20+ indicates that the Antichrist is seized and thrown into the Lake of Fire. In other words the Antichrist would cease to exist in this world (which is what slaying [more literally "take away"] will accomplish), and instead would exist forever in another "world" of unspeakable torment (Rev 20:10+).

**Isaiah** has a similar description in a Messianic prophecy declaring that "with righteousness He (THE MESSIAH) will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, **And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.**" (Isaiah 11:4+. cf Rev 1:16+, Rev 2:16+) **Vine** comments that Paul is quoting from "from Isaiah 11:4, Septuagint, *with the breath of His lips shall He slay* (LXX uses the same verb as Paul in 2 Th 2:8 = [anaireo](#)) *the impious one*"; a vivid metaphorical statement of the effect of His voice, cp. Job 4:9; Psalm 29:3-6; 33:6."

**MacDonald** - A word from Christ and the bright shining (Gk., epiphaneia) of His appearing (parousia) are all that are necessary to end the regime of this raging impostor.

**Milligan** adds that **slay with the breath** "is a powerful picture how the mere breath of the Lord will destroy this arch-enemy." (ED: This also recalls "from His mouth comes a sharp sword" Rev 19:15+, cf Rev 19:21+)

**Lewis** on **slay -Will slay (anaireo)** = will bring to an end, do away with, take out of the way. This word emphasizes the means by which he will be slain. How will He accomplish this? A mere spoken word from Christ would be enough to slay the man of lawlessness. This image is also used in Isa 11:4; 30:33; Rev 1:16+; 19:15+; Rev 19:21+. ([2 Thessalonians 2:8-12](#))

**Daniel** prophesied of the end of the reign of the Antichrist...



Daniel 7:25-26+ 'He (ANTICHRIST) will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time (GREAT TRIBULATION - 42 MONTHS, 3.5 YEARS, 1260 DAYS = Time of great distress Da 12:1). 26 'But **the court will sit for judgment, and his (ANTICHRIST) dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.**

Daniel 11:45+ "He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet **he will come to his end, and no one will help him.**

**And bring to an end** ([katargeo](#) - render useless) **by the appearance** ([epiphaneia](#)) **of His coming** ([parousia](#)) - **Wuest** gives us a good picture of this passage "the sudden appearance of His personal presence." "This word emphasizes the totality or absoluteness of his destruction." (Lewis) The same verb translated **bring to an end** ([katargeo](#)) is used of Christ's death on the Cross rendering "powerless ([katargeo](#)) him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb 2:14+, cp the effect on power of sin - Ro 6:6+). So on the Cross the Lord defeated the devil (and made the power of sin "ineffective" = [katargeo](#)) and now the Lord renders powerless the devil's main man!

**Appearance** is [epiphaneia](#) which **BDAG** says was used as a "technical term relating to transcendence it refers to a visible and frequently sudden manifestation of a hidden divinity, either in the form of a personal appearance or by some deed of power or oracular communication by which its presence is made known." And so the NIV and NLT translate it "by the **splendor** of his coming." KJV and CSB have "the **brightness** of His coming." Paul's use of **epiphaneia** describes the glorious appearance and striking splendor of the returning King (cf His "great glory" in Mt 24:30+). This word was often used by the Greeks of a glorious manifestation of their so-called gods. In the NT [epiphaneia](#) is used only of the appearing of Christ, once of His first coming (2Ti 1:10) but all the other uses referring to His Second Coming (2Th 2:8 1Ti 6:14 2 Ti 4:1 2 Ti 4:8 Titus 2:13)

*The upshot of this passage is that the lawless man himself is removed and his lawless deeds will cease.*

The phrase **the appearance of His coming** makes me think of He Who is Himself Light (John 1:4+, John 8:12+) and when that great Light appears the spiritual darkness is instantly eradicated, as when one turns on a light in a pitch black room! The kingdom of darkness will be pierced and vanquished by the King, the Light of the world, in an instant! As John writes "the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5ESV+). **Coming** is [parousia](#) used here of Christ's Second Coming which will in effect [counteract](#) the [parousia](#) or **coming** of the Antichrist (2 Th 2:9).

**Vincent** adds on **parousia** - In N. T. with a few exceptions, of the second coming of Christ. The combination manifestation of his presence (only here) appears to emphasise the resistless power of the Son of man, not (as Lightfoot) his splendor and glory. The mere appearing of his presence suffices to destroy his adversary.

THREE WORDS DESCRIBING THE COMING OF CHRIST	
<a href="#">apokalupsis</a> (2 Th 1:7)	Emphasizes the revelation of God's purpose and plan.
<a href="#">epiphaneia</a> (2 Th 2:8)	Emphasizes the manifestation of the power of God.
<a href="#">parousia</a> (2 Th 2:8)	Emphasizes the presence of the Lord with His people.

**Daniel** gives us a sense of the suddenness and completeness of the cessation of the rule of man symbolized by the Antichrist writing

"You (DANIEL) continued looking until a **Stone** (MESSIAH-CHRIST) was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue (SYMBOLIC OF MEN'S GODLESS KINGDOMS) on its feet of iron and clay and **crushed them.** 35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and **became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found.** But the **Stone** MESSIAH- CHRIST) that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (PROPHECY OF THE MESSIAH'S GLOBAL KINGDOM). (Da 2:34-35+)

The apostle John also describes this terminal of this present evil age and the resulting termination of the wicked kingdom of the Antichrist...

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He (THE LORD JESUS CHRIST) Who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. 13

He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses (THESE ARE THE REDEEMED SAINTS - YOU AND ME BELOVED! WE ARE PRIVILEGED TO WITNESS THIS CONSUMMATION OF THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE IN WHICH WE NOW LIVE!). 15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**." 17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great." 19 And I saw the **beast** (ANTICHRIST - MAN OF LAWLESSNESS) and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 And the **beast** was seized, and with him the **false prophet** who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; **these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.** 21 And **the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him** who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh. (Rev 19:11-21+)

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**Lawless** (459)(**anomos** from **a** = without + **nomos** = law; see study of related word **anomia**) means literally without law and thus lawless. Recognizing no law in 1Ti 1:8. In 1Co 9:21 **anomos** refers to not so much to those who transgress the law but those who either do not have, know or acknowledge the law (i.e., Gentiles). It describes transgressors, those who step across the the line (law), thus passing over or beyond a limit. They live without regard to law, in the sense of refusing to obey laws. **Lawless** = Not subject to law; unrestrained by law, disobedient to the law, contrary to or heedless of the law, uncontrolled; unbridled. **Synonyms of lawless** = anarchic, chaotic, disorderly, insubordinate, insurgent, mutinous, rebellious, reckless, riotous, seditious, ungoverned, unrestrained, unruly, wild

**Will be revealed** (601) see above on [apokalupto](#)

**Slay** (337)(**anaireo** from **ana** = up + **haireo** = to take) literally means to take up or lift up (from the ground), which is used literally to describe Pharaoh's daughter when she "**took** him (Moses) **away** and nurtured him as her own son." (Acts 7:21). In the figurative sense in Heb 10:9 the writer of Hebrews says "He **takes away** (in sense of to abolish, invalidate) the first (the OT sacrificial system described in Heb 10:8) in order to establish the second (the new, once for all time sacrifice of Christ)." Most of the uses of **anaireo** are used in an active sense to refer to literal killing or putting to death (Mt. 2:16; Acts 5:36; 7:28; 9:23, 24, 29; 16:27; 23:15, 21, 27; 25:3). **Anaireo** speaks of public execution (Luke 23:32; Acts 2:23; 10:39; 12:2; 13:28; 22:20; 26:10). "Two others also, who were criminals, were being led away **to be put to death** with Him." (Lk 23:32+)

**Bring to an end** (do away, nullify, void, cancel) (2673)(**katargeo** from **kata** = intensifies meaning + **argeo** = to be idle or inactive from **argos** = ineffective, idle, inactive from **a** = without + **érgon** = work) literally means to reduce to inactivity. The idea is to make the power or force of something ineffective and so to render powerless, reduce to inactivity. To do away with. To put out of use. To cause to be idle or useless. To render entirely idle, inoperative or ineffective. Cause something to come to an end or cause it to cease to happen. To abolish or cause not to function. To free or release from an earlier obligation or relationship. To no longer take place.

**Appearance** (2015)(**epiphaneia** from **epi** = upon + **phaino** = to shine; [Click](#) study of verb **epiphaino**; English = **epiphany** = the manifestation of a supernatural or divine reality or any moment of great or sudden revelation) literally means to shine upon and so describes a manifestation or appearance. This word was often used by the Greeks of a glorious manifestation of the gods, and especially of their advent to help. It has been estimated that about 1 in 20 verses in the New Testament speak either directly or indirectly about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. What one is **looking for** will (should) determine what one is **living for!** In the Books of Maccabees **epiphaneia** is used to describe appearances and interventions of God for the aid of his people. See 2 Macc. 2:21; 3:24; 14:15; 15:27; 3 Macc. 5:8, 51.

**Coming** (or "presence")(3952)(**parousia** is a combination of two Greek words **para** = with, alongside + **ousia** = being (**ousia** is the participial form of the verb **eimi** = to be) which together literally mean to be alongside. Most lexicons in fact state that **parousia** is derived from **pareimi** (from **para** = near, with + **eimi** = to be) which means to be present, to be nearby, to have come. **Parousia** then literally means a **being beside** or a **presence**. The word denotes both an arrival and a consequent presence with.

**Parousia** conveys the thought of an arrival (advent or coming) of a person to a place plus the idea of their presence at that place until a certain event transpires. The word **parousia** has no English equivalent and therefore is often transliterated in writings.

**John MacArthur - Parousia** refers to more than just coming; it includes the idea of **presence**.” Perhaps the best English translation would be **“arrival.”** The church’s great hope is the arrival of Jesus Christ when He comes to bless His people with His presence. That glorious truth appears in more than 500 verses throughout the Bible

24x in 24v especially prominent in the Thessalonian epistles - Matt. 24:3; Matt. 24:27; Matt. 24:37; Matt. 24:39; 1 Co. 15:23; 1 Co. 16:17; 2 Co. 7:6; 2 Co. 7:7; 2 Co. 10:10; Phil. 1:26; Phil. 2:12; 1 Thess. 2:19; 1 Thess. 3:13; 1 Thess. 4:15; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; 2 Thess. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:9; Jas. 5:7; Jas. 5:8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 2 Pet. 3:4; 2 Pet. 3:12; 1 Jn. 2:28

**2 Thessalonians 2:9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,**

Phillips Translation The lawless man is produced by the spirit of evil and armed with all the force, wonders and signs that falsehood can devise.

Wuest the coming and presence of whom [the man of lawlessness] is according to the operation of Satan in the sphere of miracles demonstrating power and attesting miracles and miracles of a startling, imposing, amazement-wakening character

Amplified The coming [of the lawless one, the antichrist] is through the activity and working of Satan and will be attended by great power and with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders—

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:9 ο σπιν παρουσα κατ νργειαν το σαταν ν π σ δυν μει κα σημε ος κα τ ρασιν ψε δους

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:9 The arrival of the lawless one will be by Satan's working with all kinds of miracles and signs and false wonders,

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:9 This man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:9 ο σπιν παρουσα κατ νργειαν το Σαταν ν π σ δυν μει κα σημε ος κα τ ρασιν ψε δους

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:9 him, whose presence is according to the working of the Adversary, in all power, and signs, and lying wonders,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:9 even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is based on Satan's working, with all kinds of false miracles, signs, and wonders,

- **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan** Joh 8:41,44 Ac 8:9-11 13:10 2Co 4:4 11:3,14 Eph 2:2 Rev 9:11 Rev 12:9,17 13:1-5 18:23 19:20 20:10
- **with all power and signs and false wonders** Ex 7:22 8:7,18 De 13:1,2 Mt 24:24 Mk 13:22 2Ti 3:8 Rev 13:11-15 Rev 18:23 19:20
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE "COMING" AND POWER OF THE ANTICHRIST

That is, the one whose coming ([parousia](#)) is in accord with the activity ([energeia](#)) of Satan ([satanas](#)) - While coming

or [parousia](#) usually refers to the Second Coming of Christ, here it refers to the first coming of the Antichrist. He will have no second coming, but more accurately a "going," for he will soon be going to the Lake of fire (Rev 19:20+) As Moffatt says the Antichrist "is Satan's messiah, an infernal caricature of the true messiah."

**Lewis** - The appearing of the man of lawlessness will be accompanied by things that will show Satan is energizing ([energeia](#)) him. The most powerful created spirit being is the source of Antichrist's personal strength and activity. ([2 Thessalonians 2:8-12](#))

John gives more detail as to how the Antichrist's coming in is accord with the activity of Satan -

Revelation 13:3+ I saw one of his heads (THE ANTICHRIST) as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the **beast** (ANTICHRIST); 4 they worshiped the **dragon** (SATAN) because **he gave his authority** to the **beast** (ANTICHRIST) and they worshiped the **beast**, saying, "Who is like the **beast**, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and **authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.** (COINCIDES WITH THE TIME OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION) 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 **It was also given to him (ANTICHRIST) to make war with the saints** and to overcome them, and **authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.** 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him (ANTICHRIST), everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

**With all power** ([dunamis](#) - miracles) **and signs** ([semeion](#)) **and false** ([pseudos](#)) **wonders** ([teras](#)) (literally "wonders of a lie") - **All power** almost sounds like "omnipotent," but of course it will be power on a "leash" and the Omnipotent One Himself holds the "leash" so miraculous works are only what God allows. It is however ALL the power that Satan has - he gives this to the Antichrist. And even though it is "power on a leash," clearly this last 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation will be a time of unprecedented satanically enabled deception! **Vincent** says that "**Of a lie** characterises the three words, power, signs, wonders. All bear the stamp of fraud." The Amplified version picks up this sense rendering it "miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders." **Wonders** refers to "miracles" that seem strange, which compel one's attention and cause one to "look again" and marvel.

**Wuest** paraphrases **With all power and signs and false wonders** -- "*in the sphere of miracles demonstrating power and attesting miracles and miracles of a startling, imposing, amazement-wakening character.*"

The same three words are used in Hebrews..

God also testifying with them, both by **signs** and **wonders** and by various **miracles** ([dunamis](#)) and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. (Heb 2:4+)

Notice that **power, signs** and **wonders** were a manifestation of the true Christ and here of the "false" Christ, the Antichrist. Jesus had warned of this time when He declared "false Christs (OF WHOM THE "ANTICHRIST" WAS THE SUPREME EXAMPLE) and false prophets will arise and will show great **signs** and **wonders**, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect." (Mt 24:24+)

**Lewis** - the man of lawlessness is working these things by the superhuman energy of Satan. However, his miracles are false, counterfeit, deceiving "wonders of a lie" ([pseudos](#)). All of them bear the marks of fraud or falsehood.

**MacDonald** - Here it is important to note that not all miracles are of God. The devil and his agents can perform miracles (ED: BUT ONLY AS THE OMNIPOTENT GOD ALLOWS!). The man of lawlessness will also perform them (Rev. 13:13-15+). (BBC)

**Signs** is used prominently by John to point to Jesus as the Messiah (John 2:11, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30). John writing "Therefore many other **signs** Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.(Jn 20:30-31). Satan of course is the ultimate counterfeiter and so here he uses signs to deceive (cf 2Th 2:10-12) and point people to the false Christ instead of the true Christ.

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**Coming** ([3952](#)) see note above on [parousia](#)

**Activity** ([1753](#))([energeia](#) from **en** = in + **érgon** = work) describes power that is being actively exercised, working, active, and . **Energeia** is exclusively a Pauline word used only to describe superhuman power, whether of God or of the devil **Energeia** is found in the classic Greek writings first in Aristotle describing diabolic influences. And so in In Hellenism, as in Philo, the word group [energeia/energeo](#) (noun/verb) is used of cosmic or physical forces at work in man or the world around.

**Satan** ([4567](#))([satanas](#) transliterated from Hebrew [Satan](#) - see [07854](#) and Aramaic [sātānā](#)) literally means **Adversary**, the evil antagonist who offers opposition, hostility, resentment, etc. An enemy who that contends with, opposes, resists. An **adversary** is one

who hates or opposes another person and tries to harm them or stop them from doing something because of hatred and malice. **Satan** is the [inveterate](#), [implacable](#), relentless, ruthless, remorseless, merciless, heartless, pitiless, cruel, hard, harsh, hardened, incorrigible, dedicated enemy of God and man. Paul referred to Satan in 1 Th 2:18+ explaining that "Satan hindered" them from coming to Thessalonica. Satan's power is real, but God's power is omnipotent.

**Power** (Miracles) ([1411](#)) [dunamis](#) from [dunamai](#) = to be able, to have power) power especially achieving power. It refers to intrinsic power or inherent ability, the power or ability to carry out some function, the potential for functioning in some way (power, might, strength, ability, capability), the power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature.

**Signs** ([4592](#))([semeion](#) from [sema](#) = sign) a sign is something that serves as a pointer to aid perception or insight. In the NT a sign speaks of a token which has behind it a particular message to be conveyed. In other words, in John's Gospel (where semeion is most concentrated) the apostle recorded certain miracles not for the wonder (cf "wonders") they produced, but because of the message they taught (Jn 20:31).

**False** ([5579](#))([pseudos](#) from [pseudomai](#) = to lie) describes an untrue statement, an intentional violation of the truth, a lie or a deception. Falsehood is that which is in the state of being untrue. **Pseudos** is the content of a false utterance. **Pseudos** is conscious and intentional falsehood. In a broad sense, **pseudos** is whatever is not what it seems to be or professes to be (the antithesis of **truth**).

**Wonders** ([5059](#))([teras](#) from [tereo](#) = keep, watch, connoting that which due to its extraordinary character is apt to be observed and kept in the memory) is a miracle regarded as startling, imposing or amazing. It is similar to signs but appeal to the senses, being recognized as a phenomenon that needs to be explained. **Teras** is always in the plural and always translated "**wonders**."

**2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.**

Phillips Translation with all the force, wonders and signs that falsehood can devise. To those involved in this dying world he will come with evil's undiluted power to deceive, for they have refused to love the truth which could have saved them.

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:10 καὶ ἐν παντί τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ πολλυμνοῦς, ἃ ἐν τῷ γρηγορηθῆσθαι οὐκ ἔδειξαν ἕως τοῦ σωθῆναι αὐτοῦς.

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with every kind of evil deception directed against those who are perishing, because they found no place in their hearts for the truth so as to be saved.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:10 He will use every kind of evil deception to fool those on their way to destruction, because they refuse to love and accept the truth that would save them.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:10 καὶ ἐν παντί τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ πολλυμνοῦς, ἃ ἐν τῷ γρηγορηθῆσθαι οὐκ ἔδειξαν ἕως τοῦ σωθῆναι αὐτοῦς.

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and in all deceitfulness of the unrighteousness in those perishing, because the love of the truth they did not receive for their being saved,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with every unrighteous deception among those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth in order to be saved.

- **with all the deception of wickedness** : Ro 16:18 2Co 2:17 4:2 11:13,15 Eph 4:14 2Pe 2:18 Heb 3:13
- **for those who perish** 1Co 1:18 2Co 2:15 4:3 2Pe 2:12

- **they did not receive:** Pr 1:7 2:1-6 4:5,6 8:17 Mt 13:11 Joh 3:19-21 8:45-47 Ro 2:7,8 Ro 6:17 1Co 16:22 Jas 1:16-18
- **so as to be saved.:** Joh 3:17 5:34 Ro 10:1 1Th 2:16 1Ti 2:4
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

2 Th 1:9+ These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

**Multiple related passages dealing with "judicial hardening" and the related topic of Jesus speaking in parables** - Dt 29:4+, Isa 6:9,10+ Mt 13:11-15+ Mk 4:11-12+ Lk 8:10+ Jn 9:39-41, Jn 12:38-40 Acts 28:26,27+ Ro 11:7-10+, 2Co 3:14-15+, Eph 4:17-18+, 2Th 2:10-12+.

## THE FATE OF THE FOLLOWERS OF ANTICHRIST

**and with all the deception of wickedness - Amplified** = "And by unlimited seduction to evil" **NET** = "with every kind of evil deception." **Wickedness** ([adikia](#)) corrupts the truth and chokes out the truth by its deceitfulness as Jesus described in Mt 13:22+ "And the one on whom seed (THE GOSPEL) was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the **deceitfulness** ([apate](#)) of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

**Vine** on all the deception... - Antichrist and his servants will not be restrained by any scruple from words or acts whereby men may be deceived.

**Vincent** on deception of wickedness says "deceit of unrighteousness; which is characteristic of unrighteousness and is employed by it."

**Deception** (539)([apate](#) from [apatao](#) = cheat, delude, deceive, beguile) describes that which gives a false impression, whether by appearance, statement or influence. It speaks of ethical enticement. It is spoken of anything which is **seducing** (a leading astray by persuasion or false promises) **Apate** describes that which causes someone to have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth. **Deception** - is that which deliberately causes (someone) to believe something that is not true. **Richards** notes that "Deception sometimes comes from within, as our desires impel us to deceive. But more often in the NT, deceit is error urged by external evil powers or by those locked into the world's way of thinking. ([Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

**Wickedness** (93)([adikia](#) from **a** = not + **dikê** = right) is a condition of not being right, whether with God, according to the standard of His holiness and righteousness or with man, according to the standard of what man knows to be right by his conscience. In secular Greek **adikia** referred to unjust acts, or to deeds which caused personal injury.

**for those who perish** - Literally "the perishing!" More literally those who are themselves perishing ([apollumi](#) in present tense, [middle voice](#)). They were in the process of perishing or as **Robertson** puts it "the dreadful process goes on." And remember that **perish** does not mean cessation of existence. **Perish** ([apollumi](#)) is not the loss of being, but the loss of well-being. Paul's point is that the Satanically energized signs and wonders can only "take root" in hearts that refuse to **receive the love of the truth**. Guzik adds that "These people are ready for the deception of the Antichrist, because they want a lie!"

**Lewis** on **for those who perish** - This clearly identifies the ones who will follow the man of lawlessness as people whom the god of this world has blinded (2 Cor 4:3-4) and to whom the gospel seems foolish (1 Cor 1:18). The middle voice of this participle shows that they clearly chose this for themselves. What is the reason they perish? They did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. These people rejected and turned from the truth which could have saved them.

Paul describes **the perishing** in First Corinthians writing "For the word of the cross (THE GOSPEL) is foolishness to **those who are perishing** ([apollumi](#) in present tense, [middle voice](#), but to us who are being saved (progressive sanctification, see [Three Tenses of Salvation](#)) it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18)

**Perish** (622)([apollumi](#) from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin <> **ollumi** = to destroy <> root of **apollyon** [[Re 9:11](#)] = destroyer) means to destroy utterly but not to cause one to cease to exist. To render useless. The gospel promises everlasting life for the one who believes. The failure to possess this life will result in utter ruin and eternal uselessness (but not a cessation of existence). **Apollumi** then has the basic meaning of describing that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose.

**Because** - Term of explanation. **Robertson** notes that this means "In return for which things ([anti](#)) and the genitive of the relative pronoun). Same idiom in Luke 1:20; 12:3; 19:44; Acts 12:23 and very common in the LXX." Paul introduces "the reason why "the perishing" are so readily deceived. The phrase ([anti on](#)), which is an infrequent one, conveys the idea of recompense; cp. "because he gave not God the glory," Acts 12:23." (Vine)

Explains why they were allowed to be deceived by the Satan inspired signs of the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

**They did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved- NET** = "They found no place in their hearts." **NLT** = "they refuse to love and accept the truth." The root problem was their personal choice to refuse truth of the Gospel. **Receive** is [dechomai](#) which means to put the welcome mat out for something and is modified by the strongest Greek negative (ou) signifying they absolutely refused to welcome the love of the truth. James writes "Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility **receive** ([dechomai](#)) the word implanted, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21+) Clearly the individuals described here by Paul did not put aside **all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness** and thus they had no desire for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which in effect closed the door to their only way to **be saved**. The **truth** is ultimately a person (Jesus - John 14:6 - "the Truth") and is by extension His message of **truth**, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So they rejected (had no **love** for) the Person and His message of salvation. When a person has done that, there is nothing else that God can do but give them over as in Romans 1:28+ "just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper."

**Dechomai** is used to describe the Thessalonian believers in 1 Th 1:6+ and 1 Th 2:13+ who welcomed the Gospel in contrast to those who have believed the lie of the Antichrist.

**Robertson on love of the truth** - That is the gospel in contrast with lying and deceit.

**Vine on love of the truth** - love for the truth, described more fully as "the word of the truth of the gospel," Colossians 1:5. Absence of desire for truth is evidence of moral obliquity, and is thus to be distinguished from failure to attain to, or to receive, the knowledge of truth. Having no love for the truth they remain in ignorance alike of their danger and of the way of escape therefrom.

**Receive** (1209) ([dechomai](#) = [middle voice](#) of a primary verb) means to to receive something offered or transmitted by another (Luke 2:28). To take something into one's hand and so to grasp (Luke 2:28, 22:17). To be receptive to someone (Mt 10:14, 40). To take a favorable attitude toward something (Mt 11:14). Jesus used [dechomai](#) to describe the way that humble, childlike believers (Mt 18:5), faithful preachers of the gospel (Mt 10:14), and the gospel itself (Luke 8:13; cf. Acts 8:14; 17:11) should be received. **Dechomai** means to accept with a deliberate and ready reception of what is offered, to receive kindly and so to take to oneself what is presented or brought by another. It means to welcome as a teacher, a friend, or a guest into one's house. The word describes accepting persons with open arms, minds, and hearts, even going beyond normally expected gracious hospitality. The term was often used of welcoming honored guests and meeting their needs with special attention and kindness.

**Love** (26) ([agape](#)) refers here to an attitude of appreciation resulting from a conscious evaluation and choice.

**Truth** (225) [aletheia](#) from **a** = indicates following word has the opposite meaning ~ without + **lanthano** = to be hidden or concealed, to escape notice, cp our English "*latent*" from Latin = to lie hidden) has the literal sense of that which contains nothing hidden. **Aletheia** is that which is not concealed. **Aletheia** is that which that is seen or expressed as it really is. **Truth** then is the correspondence between a **reality** and a declaration which professes to set forth or describe the **reality**. To say it another way, **words spoken or written** are **true** when they correspond with **objective reality**.

**Saved** (4982) ([sozo](#)) has the basic meaning of rescuing one from great peril, in this context the great peril is the Lake of fire and eternal punishment.

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#### Question - [Why is God going to send a strong delusion in the end times?](#)

**Answer:** The Bible makes it clear why God is sending a strong delusion in the end times: "They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). Simply put, God sends a strong delusion to those who choose not to believe the gospel of Christ. Those who take delight in mocking and rejecting Him, He will condemn.

It is a person's choice whether to accept and believe the truth of Jesus Christ as presented in the Scriptures. To receive the truth and the love God offers is in keeping with its teachings, "This is love for God: to obey His commands" (1 John 5:3). Conversely, to

know the truth and not obey it is to face the wrath of God: “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness” (Romans 1:18). Frankly speaking, there is no more dangerous condition for man than to know the truth and refuse to obey it. To do so is to harden the heart and make God’s condemnation sure.

When one knows the truth and refuses to obey it, he is subject to any lie, any deception, any untruth that humanity can conjure up. “For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools” (Romans 1:21-22). Paul goes on in the next few verses to describe the mindset and behaviors of those who disbelieve (see Romans 1:29-31). As a result of human foolishness and arrogant disdain of the things of God, “God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done” (Romans 1:28). And correspondingly, “Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things, but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:32).

Isaiah puts it succinctly: “They have chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in their abominations; so I [God] also will choose harsh treatment for them and bring upon them what they dread. For when I called, no one answered, when I spoke, no one listened. They did evil in My sight and chose what displeases Me” (Isaiah 66:3-4).

When people know the truth and refuse to receive it, when they refuse to obey it and hold it in unrighteousness, “they will be condemned for enjoying evil rather than believing the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:12 NLT).

“God is love” (1 John 4:16). He is not some cruel monster who deliberately and inwardly delights in preparing people for everlasting condemnation. But He earnestly and lovingly proclaims the gospel of Christ, “not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

Throughout the Scriptures, God urges people to accept the truth. But when people reject Him and spurn His message, then—and not until then—God hardens them and turns them over to a deluded mind to wallow in their wickedness to their eternal damnation. This is what the Lord says about those who choose to reject the truth: “They greatly love to wander; they do not restrain their feet. So the Lord does not accept them; He will now remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins” (Jeremiah 14:10). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

## **2 Thessalonians 2:11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,**

Phillips Translation God sends upon them, therefore, the full force of evil's delusion, so that they put their faith in an utter fraud

Amplified Therefore God sends upon them a misleading influence, a working of error and a strong delusion to make them believe what is false,

Wuest And because of this God sends them a deluding influence resulting in their believing the lie,

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:11 καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἰσχυρίᾳ πλῆθους ἐστὶν πιστεῖσαι αὐτοὺς τὴν ψεῦδος,

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:11 Consequently God sends on them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:11 So God will cause them to be greatly deceived, and they will believe these lies.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:11 καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἰσχυρίᾳ πλῆθους ἐστὶν πιστεῖσαι αὐτοὺς τὴν ψεῦδος,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:11 and because of this shall God send to them a working of delusion, for their believing the lie,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:11 And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie:

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:11 For this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe what is



false,

- **For this reason:** Ps 81:11,12 109:17 Isa 29:9-14 Joh 12:39-43 Ro 1:21-25,28
- **God will send upon them a deluding influence:** 1Ki 22:18-22 2Ch 18:18-22 Isa 6:9,10 Eze 14:9
- **so that they will believe what is false:** Isa 44:20 66:4 Jer 27:10 Eze 21:29 Mt 24:5,11 1Ti 4:1
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **DELUSION IS PART OF DIVINE JUDGMENT**

**For this reason** - What reason? Their choice of falsehood and their willful refusal to welcome the truth of the Gospel. The point is that God did not make them reject the truth. They choose to reject the truth. **Vine** says it is because of "their distaste for truth, their love for darkness rather than for light."

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world,  
and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.  
-- John 3:19+

**God will send upon them a deluding ([plane](#)). influence ([energeia](#))** - **Will send** is not future tense but is in the present tense, so just as "the mystery of lawlessness is already working, **the retributive judgment of God is even now in force**" (Vine) **Deluding influence** is literally "a working ([energeia](#)) of error ([plane](#))."**Vincent** notes that "The phrase is unique in N. T. It means an active power of misleading." Is God being unfair? Of course not. These people had already made the choice to refuse Jesus and His Gospel. As stated above, there was nothing else God could offer them...except to let them have the desire of their heart which was evil (2 Th 2:12 = "took pleasure in wickedness").

**Lewis** - This is a judicial act of God who gives the wicked over to the evil which they have deliberately chosen (see Ro 1:24-32+). To those who continually reject the truth, God will send an active power of misleading. This is reminiscent of the evil spirit from the Lord who terrorized Saul (1 Sa 16:14-23; 18:10; 19:9), and the spirit of falsehood sent by God in 1 Ki 22:20-22. There is a progressive downward trend: (1) They reject the love of the truth. (2) God gives them over to Satan's delusions. (3) They actually put their faith in these falsehoods (see 2 Th 2:9). ([What Happens After the Restraint Steps Aside?](#))

**Matthew Poole** made the insightful remark that "They were first deluded, which was their sin; and God sends them strong delusion, and that is their punishment."

As **Gleason Archer** puts it "In other words, God turns over to the baneful influence of Satan, the Prince of Lies, those **who have of their own free will chosen not to listen to the truth** but who by preference cleave to error. God furnishes no guarantee that He will disabuse sinners of error if they really prefer error to the truth. There is no reason why He should."

**A T Robertson** on **will send upon them** - Here is the definite judicial act of God (Milligan) who gives the wicked over to the evil which they have deliberately chosen (Ro 1:24+, Ro 1:26+, Ro 1:28+ - **ED**: EACH VERSE IN ROMANS USES [paradidomi](#) = GAVE THEM OVER TO THE POWER OR AUTHORITY OF...). Terrible result of wilful rejection of the truth of God."

**Tony Garland** has a description of the **earth dwellers** in the time of the Revelation (this time coinciding with the revealing of the lawless one) and describes how the **earth dwellers** are not able to believe the Gospel. **Garland** writes "The phrase **those who dwell upon the earth** takes on a soteriological/eschatological meaning in the book of Revelation for it denotes the unsaved at the time of the end who steadfastly continue in their rejection of God." (See his full explanation in his [discussion of earth dwellers](#)).

**Vine** - When men persistently refuse to obey the truth they soon become incapable of perceiving it. It was because men refused to have God in their knowledge that He gave them up to a reprobate mind, i.e., a mind bound to lead them astray, inasmuch as it was no longer controlled by Him, Romans 1:28+. But plainly more is intended than merely to say that God permits men to be deceived, cp. Ezekiel 14:1-9, and 1 Kings 22:19-23. The retributive justice of God is not arbitrary; sin and its punishment are related as cause and effect. Every violation of God's laws brings inevitably its own peculiar consequences. And inasmuch as God is the source of the laws under which men live, He is also the source of all the consequences to men of their violation of those laws. (Collected Writings)

**THOUGHT** - If you are reading this and have repeatedly refused the Gospel shared by friends or family and steadfastly, repeatedly chosen to embrace evil, then you need to be aware that the day may come (a day only God knows) when you will "go to far" and then God will give you over to a depraved mind to do those things which are not proper (Ro 1:28+). I implore you with the words of Jesus Christ "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent** and **believe** in the gospel." (Mk 1:15+) "for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU." **Behold**, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," **behold**, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION" (2 Cor 6:2).

**Deluding** (deceitful) (4106)(**plane** from **planos** = deceitful, root idea = has idea of wandering) ([Click](#) word study of related verb **planao**) describes a roaming or a wandering and then figuratively a going astray or a wandering out of the right way. The verbal form **planao** means to cause to wander off the path, to cause someone to hold a wrong view and so to mislead or deceive. **Vincent** says **plane** is an "error which shows itself in action...It may imply deceit as accompanying or causing error"

**Influence** (1753) see note above on [energeia](#)

**So that** (eis) describes purpose.

**They will believe what is false** (literally = "the lie") - **Wuest** = "resulting in their believing the lie." "The tense of the verb **believe** is an effective aorist and points to the time when they actually came to believe and trust in "the lie," the opposite of the truth (2 Th 2:10)." (Hiebert) What a tragic truth, that men could reject the truth and refuse to believe it so that God finally lets them believe the lie as part of their "punishment"!

**Hiebert** on what is false (literally = "the lie") - The lie is that pictured in 2 Th 2:4+, " 'the lie' par excellence, the last and crowning deception practiced by Satan in passing off the Lawless One as God." The delusion that Satan had deliberately fostered is now divinely confirmed in them since they voluntarily accepted it and desired it. (Ibid)

**Vine on the lie** - with specific reference to the lie of 2 Th 2:4, viz., that man is God; cp. also Genesis 3:5, and Romans 1:25+. See also John 8:44, lit., the lie. Cp. Revelation 17:17.

**Wiersbe** - What is "the lie"? Satan is the liar and has foisted many deceptions on the human race. But there is one "lie" that, from the beginning, has led people astray. Satan first spoke it to Eve: "You shall be as God!" The lie is the idea that man is his own God and therefore can do whatever he pleases and better himself by his own human efforts. The process is described in Romans 1:18ff. Note especially Romans 1:25: "Who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (literal translation).

**Guzik** comments that "Specifically, God sends them **the lie**. This isn't just any lie, but **the lie, the lie** that has enthralled the human race since Adam. This is the lie that God is not God, and that we are or can be gods."

**THOUGHT** - There is a frightening warning here -- Be careful when you repeatedly reject the truth of God!

**Vincent** on **what is false** (better 'the lie') - The article ("the") gives the generic senses falsehood in all its forms. Comp. J. 8:44; Rom. 1:25; Eph. 4:25. Comp. the contrast of truth and unrighteousness in ver. 12. All wrongdoing has an element of falsity.

**Believe** (4100)(**pisteuo**) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real.

**False** (5579) see note above on [pseudos](#)

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**Norman Geisler** - **2 THESSALONIANS 2:11—How can God send a lie for people to believe and yet not allow liars in heaven?**

**PROBLEM:** Paul wrote, "And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie" (2 Thes. 2:11). But Revelation 21:8 says, "the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." But it seems inconsistent for God to condemn liars and yet send such a strong delusion that people should believe a lie.

**SOLUTION:** God does not send a lie but simply confirms those who do not wish to believe the truth. God is not responsible (i.e., culpable) for those who go to hell. For it is because of their rejection of the Gospel that they eventually end up there, not because of God's negligence. The context of this passage reveals that man has already rejected the Gospel of Christ. Paul says that when the Antichrist comes, he will come with signs and false wonders with all deception of wickedness (2 Thes. 2:8–10). These things happen for "those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (v. 10). When God sends the deluding influence, Paul says He does so in order "that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (v. 12). They have chosen to reject God rather than to accept His provision of salvation. God is not sending the lie to trick people, but He sends delusions to reveal human depravity in which they choose evil over good. (When Critics Ask)

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**Gleason Archer** - **If God condemns all liars to the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8), how was it that He put a lying spirit in the mouths of the prophets of Ahab (1 Kings 22:23) or a deluding influence of men in the last days so that they believe what is false (2 Thess. 2:11)?**

The answer to this question is found in the verses preceding, that is, 2 Thessalonians 2:9–10, which speak of the coming of the “lawless one” (i.e., Antichrist) “with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of truth so as to be saved” (NASB). In other words, God turns over to the baneful influence of Satan, the Prince of Lies, those who have of their own free will chosen not to listen to the truth but who by preference cleave to error. God furnishes no guarantee that He will disabuse sinners of error if they really prefer error to the truth. There is no reason why He should.

As for the prophets of Ahab who falsely predicted victory for him if he should attempt the recapture of Ramoth-gilead from the Syrians, he fell into this same category. He did not want to know the truth of God; he hated and opposed God’s moral law wherever it went counter to his own will. Therefore he could expect no guidance from God in the matter of besieging Ramoth-gilead. Ahab’s time had run out. His confiscation of the vineyard of Naboth on the basis of a trumped-up charge for which Naboth was stoned to death was a crime for which he had to pay. Therefore the decision of God and His angels in heavenly conference—as Micaiah plainly told Ahab in the presence of Jehoshaphat—was to send a lying spirit to incline the whole pack of court prophets to give Ahab the same encouragement to march into a battle that would cost him his life (1 Kings 22:18–23).

The faith in a lie that God permitted or even encouraged in each of these cases simply represented the outworking of the moral law. If men refuse the true God, they will have to make do with a false idol of their own devising. If they reject the truth, they must be content to feed on falsehood. (NIEBD).

## 2 Thessalonians 2:12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

Phillips Translation and meet the inevitable judgment of all who have refused to believe the truth and who have made evil their play-fellow.

Amplified In order that all may be judged and condemned who did not believe in [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely on] the Truth, but [instead] took pleasure in unrighteousness.

Wuest in order that they all might be judged who did not believe the truth but took delight in wickedness.

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:12 να κριθ σιν π ντες ο μ πιστε σαντες τ ληθε λλ ε δοκ σαντες τ δικ .

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:12 And so all of them who have not believed the truth but have delighted in evil will be condemned.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:12 Then they will be condemned for enjoying evil rather than believing the truth.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:12 να κριθ σιν π ντες ο μ πιστε σαντες τ ληθε λλ ε δοκ σαντες τ δικ .

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:12 that they may be judged -- all who did not believe the truth, but were well pleased in the unrighteousness.

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:12 that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:12 so that all will be condemned-- those who did not believe the truth but enjoyed unrighteousness.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 2:12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

NRS 2 Thessalonians 2:12 so that all who have no

- **in order that they all may be judged:** De 32:35 Mk 16:16 Joh 3:36 1Th 5:9 2Pe 2:3 Jude 1:4,5
- **but took pleasure in wickedness:** Ps 11:5 50:16-21 52:3,4 Ho 7:3 Mic 3:2 Mk 14:11 Joh 3:19-21 Ro 1:32 2:8 8:7,8 12:9 2Pe 2:13-15 3Jn 1:11

- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## REAPING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ONE'S OWN CHOICE!

**In order that** ([hina](#)) - Expresses purpose, a very sad purpose.

**Lewis** - This simply expresses the natural result of their downward progression. This passage cannot be used to say that God predestines some people to damnation. It merely states that the logical outcome of their rejection of the truth is their condemnation. Why are they being condemned? Because they did not believe the truth -- they did not exercise saving faith in the true gospel. Instead they chose to exercise their faith, trust, & reliance in what was false and produced unrighteousness. ([What Happens After the Restrainer Steps Aside?](#))

**they all may be judged** - KJV puts it bluntly "That they all might be damned" **All** means no exceptions. **All** who refuse to believe will be judged. The rejection of the truth leaves only an adverse judgment (i.e., condemnation) for the rejecter. God will render His adverse decision based on the evidence of their unbelief.

**Judged** (condemned)([2919](#))([krino](#)) primarily signifies to distinguish, to decide between (in the sense of considering two or more things and reaching a decision), to make up one's mind, to separate, to discriminate. to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, without necessarily passing an adverse sentence, although that is often what is usually involved. A

**Who did not believe the truth** - They were not persuaded in their hearts **the truth** that they were sinners in need of a Savior. In short, they refused to accept the Gospel and be saved. Instead of believing the truth, they believed **the lie**. As Hiebert says "have never as a definite act entered into a personal relationship of trust and obedience to "the truth," the gospel revelation." (ibid)

**Vine on did not believe the truth**—i.e., because they refused to believe it; the negative, *mē*, used here, expresses more than the fact that they did not believe the truth, what exposed them to this judgment was their refusal to believe it; cp. 2 Th 1:8+ "those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."

**Believe** ([4100](#))([pisteuo](#)) means to be persuaded of, place one's confidence in, to trust, express reliance upon. Biblical saving faith is not passive assent but an active staking of one's life on the claims of God. The respected Greek lexicon author W E Vine defines belief as consisting of (1) a firm conviction which produces full acknowledgment of God's revelation of Truth, (2) a personal surrender to the Truth and (3) a conduct inspired by and consistent with that surrender.

**Truth** ([225](#)) see notes above on [aletheia](#). Truth is the property of being in accord with fact or reality as defined by God. Whatever God says is Truth. Truth is a person, Jesus.

**But** - Term of contrast. And what a horrible contrast it is! Good versus evil! Heaven versus Hell!

**Guzik** comments "As God gives rebellious man the lie he desires, it isn't out of His generosity. Instead, it shows God's judgment on those who reject the truth. As Romans 1 points out, in judgment God may give a man up to the depravity of his heart."

**Took pleasure** ([eudokeo](#)) **in wickedness** - NET = "have delighted in evil." If this were not in God's Word, it would be difficult to believe that people would actively pursue and delight in evil! **Took pleasure** (used in positive sense in 1 Th 2:8, 1 Th 3:1) means they found satisfaction in **wickedness** and viewed it with open approval. This reminds me of the last verse in Paul's description of men who reject the knowledge of God in Romans 1 where he sums it up writing that "although **they know the ordinance of God**, that those who practice such things are **worthy of death**, they not only **do** the same, but also **give hearty approval** to those who practice them.." (Ro 1:32+).

They have become like those described by Isaiah

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Isaiah 5:20+).

**Steve Lewis** - They took pleasure (eudokeo) in unrighteousness = it "seemed good" to them; they preferred wickedness and were strongly inclined toward it. ([What Happens After the Restrainer Steps Aside?](#))

As **Hiebert** puts it "Their willful rejection of the truth had resulted in the love of evil; evil had become their good. A moral perversion of character had taken place. He who will not accept and obey the truth will inevitably find his delight in unrighteousness." (Ibid)

**Vine on wickedness** - the sin that involves men in this catastrophe is not intellectual, unwillingness to exercise the reasoning

powers; it is moral, the love of evil. Distaste for the truth leads to its rejection; God in retributive justice sends a working of error to those who love error, this they gladly accept, yielding themselves to it and cooperating with it until they are overtaken by the climax in which the righteous judgment of God is expressed. (Collected Writings)

**Leon Morris** astutely points out that "They think that they are acting in defiance of Him. But in the end they find that those very acts in which they expressed their defiance were the vehicle of their punishment." (TOTC-2 Th)

**Took pleasure** (2106)(**eudokeo** from **eu** = well, good + **dokeo** = to think) means literally to think well of and so to be well pleased, to take pleasure or delight in.

**Wickedness** (93) see preceding note on **adikia** - a total disregard for what God says is right. Describes acts that violate standards of right conduct. They would not want to be with Jesus because He has "loved righteousness and hated lawlessness (*adikia*)." (Heb 1:9+)

**THOUGHT** - The Lord Jesus Christ **IS** coming, and the wicked **WILL** be judged. In fact, we will be there with Him to witness these events. There will come a time when deception will run rampant – even the elect will be in danger of being led astray (Mt 24:24). Let us continue to love the truth – and let us share the truth while we can. (Steve Lewis)

**2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.**

Amplified But we, brethren beloved by the Lord, ought and are obligated [as those who are in debt] to give thanks always to God for you, because God chose you from the beginning as His firstfruits (first converts) for salvation through the sanctifying work of the [Holy] Spirit and [your] belief in (adherence to, trust in, and reliance on) the Truth.

Wuest But as for us, we have a sense of moral obligation to be giving thanks to God always concerning you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you out [from the rest of mankind] for salvation, this choice being within the sphere of the setting-apart work of the Spirit and a belief of the truth,

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:13 με ς δ̄ φε λομεν ε χαριστε ν τ θε π ντοτε περ μ ν, δελφο γαπημ νοι π κυρ ου, πι ε λατο μ ς θε ς παρχ ν ε ς σωτηρ αν ν γιασμ πνε ματος κα π στει ληθε ς,

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:13 As for us, we can't help but thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are always thankful that God chose you to be among the first to experience salvation-- a salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy and through your belief in the truth.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:13 με ς δ̄ φε λομεν ε χαριστε ν τ θε π ντοτε περ μ ν, δελφο γαπημ νοι π κυρ ου, πι ε λατο μ ς θε ς παρχ ν ε ς σωτηρ αν ν γιασμ πνε ματος κα π στει ληθε ς,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway 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:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:13 And we -- we ought to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, that God did choose you from the beginning to salvation, in sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we must always thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God has chosen you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

- **we should always give thanks to God for you:** 2Th 1:3 Ro 1:8 6:17
- **brethren beloved by the Lord:** 2Th 2:16 De 33:12 2Sa 12:25 \*marg: Jer 31:3 Eze 16:8 Da 9:23 10:11,19 Ro 1:7 Col 3:12 1Jn 4:10,19
- **from the beginning:** Ge 1:1 Pr 8:23 Isa 46:10 Joh 1:1 8:44 Heb 1:10
- **has chosen you :** Ro 8:33 9:11 Eph 1:4,5 1Th 1:4 2Ti 1:9 1Pe 1:2
- **through sanctification by the Spirit:** 2Th 2:10,12 Lu 1:75 1Pe 1:2-5
- **faith in the truth:** Joh 8:45,46 14:6 Ac 13:48 15:9 Ga 3:1 Eph 2:8 Col 1:5 2Ti 2:15 2Ti 3:15 Jas 1:18
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SAVED NOW CONTRASTED WITH THE LAWLESS

**But** - A dramatic contrast between those who reject Jesus and are condemned by Him (cf Jn 5:22) and those who love Him are loved by Him.

**We should always give thanks to God for you, brethren ([adelphos](#)) beloved by the Lord** - What a "breath of fresh air" for Paul to now be able to focus on his spiritual children who bring just joy and thanksgiving to his heart! If you have made disciples, you know exactly the feeling Paul was experiencing as he wrote these affirming words! **Should** speaks of obligation or paying a debt and is in the present tense (continually). Similarly **give thanks ([eucharisteo](#))** is also in the present tense and speaks of an attitude of gratitude in prayer to God. I love the verb **beloved ([agapao](#))** because it describes God's unconditional love for His children in Christ (cf 1 Jn 3:1+) and the perfect tense underscores the abiding (eternal) nature of His love for us! I call that ["amazing love, how can it be?"](#) Notice Paul repeats the truth ("beloved" in 1 Th 1:4+) to these "momentarily" afflicted saints that they are eternally loved by the Most High God!

**Lewis** - God's love is the basis for His other actions, which Paul now mentions. The typical word for "choosing" in the sense of God's election is *eklego* (His selection), but here Paul uses *haireomai* with the idea of God's eternal purpose of adoption -- taking them to become His own (see Deut 7:7-8; 10:15 in the Septuagint). ([What Happens After the Restraint Steps Aside?](#))

**We should** ([3784](#))([opheilo](#) from *ophéilo* = heap up) means to owe something to someone. Literally it speaks of financial indebtedness and thus means to owe money, to be in debt, or to describe that which is due (Mt 18:28, Lk 7:41, 16:5, 7, Philemon 1:18). The verb *opheilo* was sometimes used to describe "the debt" itself. Figuratively, *opheilo* describes a sense of indebtedness to someone for something. For example, it was used to describe owing good will (1Co 7:3), love (Ro 13:8 = we can never love enough and will always "owe" this debt). **Opheilo** in most of the NT uses conveys the sense of necessity, duty or to be under obligation (obligation = moral requirement which conveys the binding force of civility, kindness or gratitude, when the performance of a duty cannot be enforced by law). The idea is that one is held or bound by duty, moral obligation or necessity to do something. **Opheilo** is also in 2 Th 1:3+ "We **ought** (*opheilo*) always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater."

**Give thanks** ([2168](#)) [eucharisteo](#) from *eucháristos* = thankful, grateful, well-pleasing - Indicates the obligation of being thankful to someone for a favor done <> in turn from *eú* = well + *charízomai* = to grant, give.; English - Eucharist) means to show that one is under obligation by being thankful. To show oneself as grateful (most often to God in the NT). **Eucharisteo** is a word that at its very core (*eu* = good + *charis* = grace) means to acknowledge how **good grace** is! **Moulton and Milligan** note that **eucharisteo** originally meant "do a good turn to" or "oblige," and in late Greek passed readily into the meaning "be grateful," "give thanks". Giving thanks is the quality of being grateful, with the implication of also having appropriate (Spirit filled) attitude.

**Brethren** ([80](#))([adelphos](#) from *a* = denotes unity + *delphus* = a womb) literally means brother referring to a physical brother or figuratively as in this passage refers to a brother or sister in the Lord. We are closer to those who are believers than we are to our blood relatives who are not believers!

**Beloved** (25)([agapao](#) see related study of noun [agape](#)) means to love unconditionally and sacrificially as God Himself loves sinful men (John 3:16), the way He loves the Son (John 3:35, 15:9, 17:23, 24).

**Because** - Explains why Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are giving thanks (and to an extent why the Thessalonians can be called "beloved.")

**God has chosen you from the beginning** - **Chosen** is not the usual word for choosing ([eklego](#); [eklektos](#)) and is in the middle voice could be read more literally "having chosen **for himself**" giving us a beautiful picture of God's love for us! **From the beginning** probably means before time began but the phrase is not easy to interpret. Compare 1Co 2:7 (God predestined before the ages to our glory"); Ep 1:4+ ("He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world"); 2Ti 1:9+ ("according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity").

**THOUGHT** - He chose us FOR HIMSELF. That begs the question -- for whom am I living, SELF or SAVIOR?

**Chosen** (choosing) (138)([haireomai](#) rom [haireo](#) = to take a particular position for oneself) means to make a choice of one or more possible alternatives and so to choose, select or prefer. Note also that the use of the [aorist tense](#) here marks it as a single and definite act. See related resource [Who are the elect of God? | GotQuestions.org](#).

**Beginning** (746)([arche](#)) means beginning of anything, and is used this way of Jesus (Jn 1:1, Heb 1:10).

**Technical Note on beginning** - Several manuscripts (B F G P 0278 33 81 323 1739 1881 al bo) read [aparche](#) ("as a first fruit"; i.e., as the first converts) instead of [arche](#) (ap' arches, "from the beginning," found in a D Y Ū it sa), but this seems more likely to be a change by scribes who thought of the early churches in general in this way. But Paul would not be likely to call the Thessalonians "the first fruits" among his converts. Further, [aparche](#), ("first fruit") is a well-worn term in Paul's letters (Rom 8:23; 11:16 ; 16:5; 1 Cor 15:20, 23; 16:15), while [arche](#) occurs nowhere else in Paul. Scribes might be expected to change the text to the more familiar term. Nevertheless, a decision is difficult (see arguments for [aparche](#) in TCGNT 568), and [arche](#) must be preferred only slightly. (NET NOTES)

**For** ([eis](#) = unto) **salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith** ([pistis](#)) **in the truth** ([aletheia](#)) - This is a beautiful description of our **salvation** showing the role of the Spirit setting us apart for God's use (GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY) and the exercising of faith (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY, ALBEIT STILL DEPENDENT ON GOD) **in the truth**, the Gospel of our salvation (Eph 1:13+). Note that **faith in the truth** is the direct contrast with "not believe the truth" (2 Th 2:12).

**Lewis** - the product of God's loving and choosing is our deliverance from sin and the wrath of God (see 1 Th 5:9+ = "God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,"). ([What Happens After the Restrainer Steps Aside?](#))

**Salvation** (4991)([soteria](#) from [soter](#) = Savior in turn from [sozo](#) = save, rescue, deliver) means deliverance from danger, destruction, peril and slavery to and consequences of sin and unto restoration to a former state (like the Garden of Eden but even better) of safety, health, well being and preservation from danger of destruction.

**Sanctification** (38)([hagiasmos](#) from [hagiazō](#) = sanctify from [hagios](#) = holy, set apart, consecrated) describes the state of being set apart from sin and the world to God (the sense in 2 Thes 2:13) or the process of becoming more dedicated to God (aka progressive sanctification). "Human beings ultimately cannot sanctify themselves. The Triune God sanctifies. The Father sanctifies (1Co 1:30) by the Spirit (2Th 2:13; 1Pe 1:2) and in the name of Christ (1Co 6:11). Yet Christian faith is not merely passive. Paul calls for active trust and obedience." (from [Mullen's excellent article on sanctification](#).)

**Faith** (4102)([pistis](#)) means a firm persuasion, conviction, belief in the truth, veracity, reality or faithfulness. Not just mental assent but firm conviction, surrender to that truth and conduct emanating fr that surrender. In sum, faith shows itself genuine by a changed life. Pistis is used frequently in the epistles to the Thessalonians -1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:8; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Thess. 3:7; 1 Thess. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:2

**Truth** (225) see notes above on [aletheia](#). In context the truth is the Gospel ([euaggelion](#))

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## F B Meyer - 2 Thessalonians 2:13

God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.

From the beginning! Who shall compute the contents of the vast unknown abyss, which is comprehended in that phrase? The beginning of creation was preceded by the anticipation of Redemption, and the love of God to all who were one with Christ.

God's aim and purpose. Salvation. — Not simply our deliverance from the penalty, but from the power of all besetting sin; so that we may be delivered from the fear of our enemies, and serve Him in holiness and righteousness all our days. This He is prepared to give to us; but we must claim it by faith.

God's choice. — Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate. From all eternity He saw those who would be attracted to Jesus by a Divine affinity, and these were included in his gift to the Son. "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me, and they have kept thy word." We must not presume on the eternal choice; but we may be very grateful that the tendencies emanating from the fall are met, in mid-flow, by the grace and choice of the Almighty.

God's method. Through sanctification of the Spirit. — The Holy Ghost sets us apart from sin, and consecrates us to God. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." Our sanctification is not the property of our soul, but its possession of the Holy One; not an attribute, but a Person. And belief of the truth. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly. Hide it in your heart, that you may be kept from sin. We are sanctified by the truth in so far as we expose our hearts to its entrance and rule. We are cleansed by the washing of water through the Word.

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## The Belayers

We also pray always for you . . . that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you. —2  
Thessalonians 1:11-12

Today's Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

I have high respect for brave men and women who climb rugged mountain peaks. They have to take serious precautions as they scale sheer cliffs. One safety feature is a line that's always connected to a person below, who is called the "belayer." If the climber loses his balance or falls, the belayer holds him securely until he can regain his footing and continue his ascent or descent. Thus, "to belay" is to anchor, to hold securely, to keep safe.

Hope Church, near Cincinnati, has an adult fellowship group called "The Belayers." Its members are committed to giving one another help and support in their daily walk with Christ and promise to uphold one another in prayer. They provide assistance as needed, they encourage one another, and they come alongside in times of spiritual danger. They "hold the ropes" for each other.

I think that the apostle Paul was a belayer for many churches, including the Thessalonian church. The believers there were undergoing persecution and were troubled. He reminded them that they were chosen and still loved by God (2 Thess. 2:13). And he encouraged them to continue trusting the Lord, and prayed for them (2 Thes 2:15-17). By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Whose "rope" is God encouraging you to hold?

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## His Choice

God from the beginning chose you for salvation. — 2 Thessalonians 2:13

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

When our children were small, I often prayed with them after we tucked them into bed. But before I prayed, I sometimes would sit on the edge of the bed and talk with them. I remember telling our daughter Libby, "If I could line up all the 4-year-old girls in the world, I would walk down the line looking for you. After going through the entire line, I would choose you to be my daughter." That always put a big smile on Libby's face because she knew she was special.

If that was a smile-worthy moment for her, think of the grace-filled fact that the Creator-God of the universe "from the beginning chose you for salvation" (2 Thess. 2:13). Before time began, He desired to make you His own. This is why Scripture often uses the picture of adoption to communicate the amazing reality that, through no merit or worthiness of our own, we have been chosen by Him.

This is stunning news! We are "beloved by the Lord" (v.13) and enjoy the benefits of being part of His family. This glorious truth should fill our lives with humility and gratitude. "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us . . . establish you in every good word and work" (vv.16-17). By: Joe Stowell ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand](#)



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I will be forever grateful that I am Your child,  
Father, and that You love me! Teach me to remember  
all the benefits of belonging to You, and may I  
serve You faithfully as part of Your family.

It's God's choice to love you and to make you part of His family.

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### Not Again!

God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. 2  
Thessalonians 2:13

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

As I was reading the text message on my mobile phone, my temperature started to rise and my blood began to boil. I was on the verge of shooting back a nasty message when an inner voice told me to cool down and reply tomorrow. The next morning after a good night's sleep, the issue that had upset me so greatly seemed so trivial. I had blown it out of proportion because I didn't want to put another person's interest before my own. I was unwilling to inconvenience myself so I could help someone.

Regretfully, I am tempted to respond in anger more often than I would like to admit. I constantly find myself having to put into practice familiar Bible truths, such as "Be angry, and do not sin" (Eph. 4:26) and "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4).

Thankfully, God has given us His Spirit who will assist us in our battle with our sin. The apostles Paul and Peter called it the "sanctifying work of the Spirit" (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2 niv). Without His power, we are helpless and defeated; but with His power, we can have victory. By: Poh Fang Chia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I'm grateful, Lord, that You are at work in me. I want You to change my heart; please help me to listen and to cooperate with You.

For help with anger issues, read [When Anger Burns](#)

The growth of a saint is the work of a lifetime.

**2 Thessalonians 2:14 It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Amplified [It was] to this end that He called you through our Gospel, so that you may obtain and share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

Wuest also He summoned you through our good news, resulting in your acquisition of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:14 ες [κα] κλεσεν μς δι το εαγγελ ου μν ες περιπο ησιν δ ξης το κυρ ου μν ησο Χριστο .

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to this salvation through our gospel, so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to salvation when we told you the Good News; now you can share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:14 To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:14 ες [κα] κλεσεν μς δι το εαγγελ ου μν ες περιπο ησιν δ ξης το κυρ ου μν ησο Χριστο .

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:14 to which He did call you through our good news, to the acquiring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:14 whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to this through our gospel, so that you might obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 2:14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- **He called you through:** Ro 8:28-30 1Th 2:12 1Pe 5:10
- **through our gospel:** Ro 2:16 16:25 1Th 1:5
- **that you may gain** Ps 16:11 Mt 25:21 Joh 14:2,3 17:22,24 Ro 8:17 Eph 1:18 1Th 2:12 2Ti 2:12 1Pe 1:4,5 5:10 Rev 3:21 21:23 22:3-5
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## CALLED FOR A PURPOSE

**It was for this** - For what? For salvation, God's "operation rescue!"

**He called you through our gospel** - **Called** speaks of an irresistible, effectual call by God (See [effectual calling](#)), energized by the Spirit in our heart drawing us to receive the truth of the Gospel. Yes, God calls, but yes, we are responsible to exercise faith. Yes, this is a mystery! Paul's main point in this section was to remind the Thessalonians that there was no need to be agitated or troubled (2 Th 2:2) thinking they had missed the rapture and thus were in the Day of Lord judgment. They were destined for glory, not judgment and would not be included with those deceived and judged in that Day. Notice that the call comes through the **Gospel**, which means we all need to be diligent in proclaiming the Gospel to the lost around us.

"Religions are man's search for God; the Gospel is God's search for man.

There are many religions, but one Gospel."

E. Stanley Jones

**Called** (invited, summoned) ([2564](#))([kaleo](#)) literally means to speak to another in order to attract their attention or to them bring nearer, either physically or in a personal relationship. **Kaleo** is a major verb in the NT and its specific meaning depends on the the [context](#) in which it is used. Play [Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling](#)

**Merrill Unger on call to salvation**... "To call" signifies to invite to the blessings of the gospel, to offer salvation through Christ. This calling is, we believe, general, extending to all mankind. There is likewise a calling by the Spirit that is not resisted and clearly described as an efficacious calling. The efficacious calling of God is tantamount to His sovereign choice. There are now two elect companies in the world— Israel and the church. Both alike appear in Scripture as called by God. Israel's calling is national, whereas the calling of those who compose the church is individual. It is wholly within the bounds of the efficacious calling that believers are termed the called ones. They are thus distinguished from the general mass who though subject to a general call are not efficaciously called. The efficacious call is the work of God in behalf of each elect person under grace. They are referred to as "those who are called according to His purpose" (Ro 8:28). The apostle goes on to declare that those whom God foreknew, He predestined; those whom He predestined, He called; those whom He called, He justified; and those whom He justified, He glorified (Ro 8:29, 30). Calling, then, is that choice on the part of God of an individual through an efficacious working in his mind and heart by the Holy Spirit so that the will of the one who is called operates by its own determination in the exercise of saving faith. In this way two great necessities are provided; namely, only those are called whom God has predestined to be justified and glorified and those who are thus called choose from their own hearts and minds to accept Christ as Savior. (Unger, M. F., Harrison, R. K., Vos, H. F., Barber, C. J., & Unger, M. F. (1988). The new Unger's Bible dictionary (Rev. and updated ed.). Chicago: Moody Press)

**Gospel** ([2098](#))([euaggelion](#)) As in the OT so among the Greeks the term was used for the proclamation of

news of victory. Often the news was sent in a letter, but also came from the field of battle by ship, by horse, or a swift runner, who proclaims to the anxiously awaiting city the victory of the army, and the death or capture of the enemy. Ponder these secular uses of "gospel" in light of the NT teaching! Others uses included being gladdened by the birth of a son, by news of an approaching wedding, or of the death of someone. Liberation from enemies and deliverance from the demonic powers which frighten men are occasions for euaggelizesthai.

**That** ([eis](#)- unto - Literally "to the gaining of") - Our calling has a high, holy and eternal purpose (gain).

**You may gain the glory (doxa) of our Lord (kurios) Jesus (Iesous) Christ (Christos)** - There is **glory** for believers now but it is but a faint glimmer of the glory. Paul writes about our present glory "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror **the glory of the Lord**, are being transformed into the same image **from glory to glory**, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." (2 Cor 3:18+). And so in this life as the Spirit uses the Word and brings about progressive sanctification, believers are experiencing an increasing glory. And yet this is but a very faint "preview of coming attractions" for John promises that "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. **We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.**" (1 Jn 3:2+, cf "day of redemption" = our glorification - Eph 4:30+, Eph 1:14+) Finally! Fully glorified! Like **our Lord Jesus Christ** forever and ever (see "eternal glory" 2 Ti 2:10+)! Hallelujah! Amen!

**Related Passages on gain the glory:**

John 17:22 "The **glory** which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;

Romans 8:17+ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him **so that we may also be glorified with Him**

Paul used the same relatively uncommon Greek word for **gain** ([peripoiesis](#)) in his first letter to the Thessalonians writing "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for **obtaining** ([peripoiesis](#)) **salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Th 5:9+).

these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called,

He also justified; and these whom He justified,

He also glorified.

-- Romans 8:30+

**Gain** (4047)([peripoiesis](#)) from **peripoieomai** = literally means to make around oneself and then to acquire or purchase) means that which is acquired by purchase with the corresponding idea of preservation of that which is purchased. Used only 5x in NT - Eph. 1:14; 1 Thess. 5:9; 2 Thess. 2:14; Heb. 10:39; 1 Pet. 2:9

**Steve Lewis summarizes Paul's contrasts...**([Paul Contrasts the Lawless with the Saved](#))

Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ	Followers of the "man of lawlessness"
Those who are loved and chosen by God from eternity (2 Th 2:13)	Those who [by their own choice] perish (2 Th 2:10)
Those who put their faith in the Truth (2 Th 2:13)	Those who do not receive the love of the truth (2 Th 2:10), but put their faith in falsehood (2 Th 2:11-12)
Those who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit (2 Th 2:13)	Those who are deceived by Satan (2 Th 2:9), so that wickedness seems good to them (2 Th 2:12)
Those who are called through the gospel (2 Th 2:14)	Those who reject the gospel which could have saved them (2 Th 2:10)
Those who are destined for glorification (2 Th 2:14)	Those who are destined for condemnation (2 Th 2:12)

These two verses form a miniature systematic theology of salvation!

- They describe the elements of the "Golden Chain of Redemption" (Rom 8:29-30)
  - o "Fore-Loved" by God

- o Election to Salvation
- o Sanctification by the Holy Spirit
- o Faith in the Truth
- o Effectual Calling through the Gospel
- o Ultimate Glorification of the Believer

In the area of election alone, here is what this section shows:

FACT	IMPLICATION
God has chosen or elected them to salvation	The doctrine of election is true
This was from "the beginning" -- from eternity (see John 1:1; Eph 1:4; 3:9-11)	The doctrine of eternal election is true
This involved choosing the individuals to whom Paul speaks in this letter	The doctrine of individual election is true

**2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.**

Amplified So then, brethren, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions and instructions which you were taught by us, whether by our word of mouth or by letter.

Wuest So then, brethren, be constantly standing firmly, and be holding fast to the teachings which were delivered to you to be passed on to others, which you were taught either orally or through our letter.

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:15 ρα ο ν, δελφο , στ κετε κα κρατε τε τ ς παραδ σεις ς διδ χθητε ε τε δι λ γου ε τε δι πιστολ ς μ ν.

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold on to the traditions that we taught you, whether by speech or by letter.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:15 With all these things in mind, dear brothers and sisters, stand firm and keep a strong grip on the teaching we passed on to you both in person and by letter.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:15 ρα ο ν, δελφο , στ κετε, κα κρατε τε τ ς παραδ σεις ς διδ χθητε ε τε δι λ γου ε τε δι πιστολ ς μ ν.

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:15 so, then, brethren, stand ye fast, and hold the deliverances that ye were taught, whether through word, whether through our letter;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions you were taught, either by our message or by our letter.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

- **stand firm:** 1Co 15:58 16:13 Php 4:1
- **hold to :** 2Th 3:6 1Co 11:2

- **the traditions** Ro 16:17 Jude 1:3
- **whether by word of mouth:** 2Th 2:2 3:14
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**So then** - Term of conclusion. Based on the truth about our security in Christ and our hope of glory in Him.

**Brethren** ([adelphos](#)), **stand firm** - **Stand firm** is a command in the [present imperative](#) (see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) calling for the saints to continue to persevere and remain firm in their faith in the Lord, especially in view of the "persecutions and afflictions." (2 Th 1:4+) Earlier Paul had requested that they not be shaken from their composure (2 Th 2:2+), but now he commands them to stand firm.

**THOUGHT** - Christians are in constant danger of being swept downstream by the currents of ungodly culture. They are prone to let the truths they know and the relationship they enjoy with God grow cold. It's like spiritual entropy. (Phil 1:27)

**Stand firm** (4739) ([steko](#)) can mean to **stand** literally ("whenever you **stand** praying... " [Mk 11:25](#)) but in the other NT uses **steko** is used figuratively meaning in a positive sense of to stand firm in faith and duty, to be constant, to persevere, to remain steadfast, to continue in a state. It can mean to be firmly committed in conviction or belief. In [Jn 8:44](#) Jesus uses **steko** in a negative sense describing the fact that the devil absolutely does not **stand** in the truth.

**And hold to the traditions which you were taught whether by word of mouth or by letter from us**- NLT says "keep a strong grip on the teaching we passed on to you both in person and by letter." **Hold to** like the first command is in the [present imperative](#) (see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) Recall that in 2 Th 2:5 Paul reminded the Thessalonians that he had taught them these things while he was still with them and now commands them to hold them fast. Note it was not just any word or letter but was "our" word and "our" letter.

**THOUGHT** - Hold God's Word with a firm grasp and never let it slip away. Like a relay race, each generation must take the baton and make sure it is held firmly so as to be passed on to the next generation (2 Ti 2:2+). We are all prone to let the truths we know and the relationship we enjoy with God grow cold. We need to vigorously hold to what we have been taught by God's servants.

**THOUGHT** - In no way can this verse be used to support the idea that man-made traditions and rules hold equal authority to the revealed Word of God in the closed canon of Scripture. (Lewis)

**Hold to** (2902) ([krateo](#)) has basic meaning be strong or possess power and thus means to take hold of, grasp, hold fast. [Krateo](#) is from word that means strength ([kratos](#)), therefore the idea can be to "seize" (soldiers came to seize Jesus). [Krateō](#) is used here meaning to "hold fast" with the idea of being loyal to or closely united with someone or something.

**Traditions** (3862) ([paradosis](#) from [paradidomi](#) = deliver in teaching) means literally to give from the presence of, thus to give personally. It signifies an act of transmission or that which is transmitted and thus refers to that which is handed down or transmitted from generation to generation; injunction delivered or from one to another. It was used to refer to the Pharisaic traditions which had been engrafted on the Mosaic Law (Mt 15:2, 6; Mk 7:3, 13). **Paradosis** "means literally "to give from the presence of," thus "to give personally." It signifies an act of transmission or that which is transmitted. In the New Testament it is used in the latter sense, without indicating the method of transmission or implying any lapse of time such as is usually associated with the English word tradition." (Wuest)

Lewis adds **paradosis** "is from the verb [paradidomi](#) and implies that the teacher is faithfully passing on a specific message received from a higher authority. The traditions or opinions of men are valuable only to the extent that they confirm the intended meaning of the Word of God."

**Were taught** (1321) ([didasko](#) from [dáo](#)= know or teach; English = didactic; see study of related noun [didaskalia](#) and the adjective [didaktikos](#)) means to provide instruction or information in a formal or informal setting. **Didasko** means to teach a student in such a way that the will of the student becomes conformed to the teaching taught. So the teacher teaches in such a way that as the student is taught, he/she now changes his/her mind saying in essence "I won't do it this way, but I will do it this way because I've learned this doctrine or this teaching." Doctrine determines direction of our behavior--conformed to world or to God? (cf Ro 12:1+) Teaching that Scripture finds significant is not that which gives information alone but which produces (Spirit enabled) transformation (2 Cor 3:18+), making disciples (learners) who seek to live supernaturally (enabled by the Spirit - Eph 5:18+) in loving obedience to the will of our Father Who art in

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## David Jeremiah - GET BUSY FOR GOD

2 THESSALONIANS 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

Paul says, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle" (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

The daily news can discourage us. But in the midst of it all, there is Jesus and His encouragement. We need to cultivate our relationship with Him until He is not just one of the things in our life, He is the one thing in our life—the focus of who we are.

"Comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work," Paul goes on to say. This is not the time to wear a white robe, sit on a fence, and passively wait for the Lord's return. This is a time to use the powers and energy you have and get busy for God.

The most simple objective of Christians is not only to go to heaven, but to take as many people with us as we can. Share the gospel, teach children, build up one another, strengthen one another, encourage those who are fallen, and reach out to those who are hurting.

In every good work, "occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13 KJV), said the Lord. This is no time for idleness. This is a time for us to seek the truth and live it out every day. (Sanctuary)

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### Related Resource:

- [What is sola scriptura? | GotQuestions.org](#) -- Discusses the role of "traditions"

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## 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace,

Amplified Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, Who loved us and gave us everlasting consolation and encouragement and well-founded hope through [His] grace (unmerited favor),

Wuest Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father who loved us and who gave us everlasting encouragement and a good hope, this gift having been given us in [His] grace,

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Α τ ς δ κ ρ ι ο ς μ ν η σ ο ς Χ ρ ι σ τ ς κ α [ ] θ ε ς π α τ ρ μ ν γ α π σ α ς μ ς κ α δ ο ς π α ρ κ λ η σ ι ν α ω ν α ν κ α λ π δ α γ α θ ν ν χ ρ ι π ι,

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope,

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope,

ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace,

NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,

GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Α τ ς δ κ ρ ι ο ς μ ν η σ ο ς Χ ρ ι σ τ ς κ α [ ] θ ε ς π α τ ρ μ ν γ α π σ α ς μ ς κ α δ ο ς π α ρ κ λ η σ ι ν α ω ν α ν κ α λ π δ α γ α θ ν ν χ ρ ι π ι,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:16 and may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and our God and Father, who did love us, and did give comfort age-during, and good hope in grace,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace,

CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:16 May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal encouragement and good hope by grace,

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,

- **Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself:** 2Th 1:1,2 Ro 1:7 1Th 3:11
- **who has loved us:** 2Th 2:13 Joh 3:16 13:1 15:9,13 Ro 5:8 Eph 2:4,5 5:2,25 Tit 3:4-7 1Jn 3:16 4:9,10 Rev 1:5 3:9
- **given us eternal comfort:** Ps 103:17 Isa 35:10 51:11 60:19,20 61:7 Lu 16:25 Joh 4:14 Joh 14:16-18 16:22 2Co 4:17,18 Heb 6:18 1Pe 1:5-8 Rev 7:16,17 Rev 22:5
- **and good hope:** Ro 5:2-5 8:24,25 Col 1:5,23 1Th 1:3 Tit 1:2 2:13 Heb 6:11 Heb 6:12,19 7:19 1Pe 1:3-5 1Jn 3:2,3
- **by grace:** Ac 15:11 18:27 Ro 4:4,16 5:2 11:5,6
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL'S CLOSING PRAYER/BENEDICTION

**Now may of our Lord ([kurios](#)) Jesus ([lesous](#)) Christ ([Christos](#)) Himself and God our Father, Who has loved ([agapao](#)) us** - First note that Paul puts the Son and the Father on the same plane. Jesus is fully God just like His Father. Paul had just used this same verb [agapao](#) in calling the believers **beloved** (2 Th 2:13), and now reiterates that God **has loved** them. It is good to be reminded of God's love past, present and future, and given the persecutions and the fears that they might be in the Day of the Lord, Paul reminds them of God's love as he does all of us in Romans 8:37 writing "in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him Who **loved** us."

**And given us eternal comfort and good hope by** (literally "in", so in the sphere of) **grace** - **Given** describes a decision by the will of the Father and based on no merit in us as beneficiaries of such amazing grace and so great a salvation. God grants men hope, confidence, assurance, and security in the future if they will accept them as a gift. **Comfort** is consolation and encouragement forever and ever. And since we are already in eternity, this **comfort** from God is available to us even now. The teaching of encouragement is for the purpose of strengthening/establishing believer Ro 15:4; Phil 2:1; Heb 12:5; Heb 13:22. Hope by itself would have been sufficient but Paul refers to it as good hope, where good (*agathos*) describes this hope as constitutionally good, beneficial in effect, pleasant, agreeable, joyful in its fruits. Hope in Scripture is the absolute certainty of future good. It is "defined" as "full assurance." (Heb 6:11) 1Ti 1:1 describes our hope as a person, [Christ Jesus Our Hope](#). We have the blessed hope of His soon return to rescue us from the wrath to come (1 Th 1:10+). As I like to say the believer's hope is not a "hope so," but a "hope sure!" The antithesis of hope is despair, something all of us experience in our time of stay on the earth, but which we will never experience throughout eternity to come. If that does not [emote](#) a "Hallelujah" I don't know what will!

**Eternal** (166)([aionios](#)) means a perpetual eternal, everlasting, without beginning or end (our salvation of course had a "beginning" but will have no end), that which always will be. It is a difficult idea to put into language.

**Comfort** (3874)([paraklesis](#) from [parakaléo](#) = beseech <> [pará](#) = side of + [kaléo](#) = call) refers to calling to one's side or one's aid which can be for the purpose of providing solace, comfort, consolation, exhortation, encouragement. Or stated another way it has the root meaning of coming alongside someone to give assistance by offering comfort, counsel, or exhortation. Ponder that in light of eternity in Heaven! God Himself coming alongside us and giving us unspeakable comfort forever! **Comfort** is from Latin **com** = with + **fortis** = strong, and means to invigorate, to enliven, to cheer, to strengthen one's mind when depressed, to give new vigor to one's spirits, to give strength or hope to another, to ease their grief or trouble.

**Good** (18)([agathos](#)) means intrinsically good, inherently good in quality and with the idea of good which is also profitable, useful, benefiting others, benevolent.

**Hope** (1680)([elpis](#)) in Scripture is not the world's definition of "I **hope** so", with a few rare exceptions (e.g., [Acts 27:20](#)) **Hope** is defined as a desire for some future good with the expectation of obtaining it. **Hope** is always an expectation of something good as well as descriptive of something for which we must wait. Paul used this great word 4x in his first epistle - 1 Th 1:3, 1 Th 2:19, 1 Th 4:13, 1 Th 5:8 (and all are worth spending a few moments in meditation!) (See related study [The Blessed Hope: Part 1](#))

**Grace** (favor) (5485)([charis](#)) conveys the sense of favor. **Grace** is God's unmerited favor and supernatural enablement and empowerment for salvation and for daily sanctification. **Grace** is everything for nothing to those who don't deserve anything! Someone has written that the word **grace** is probably the greatest word in

the Scriptures, even greater even than "love," because **grace** is love in action, and therefore includes it. It is hardly too much to say that God has in no word uttered Himself and all that was in His heart more distinctly than in this word grace (charis)!

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**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - "Everlasting consolation."**—2 Thessalonians 2:16

"Consolation." There is music in the word: like David's harp, it charms away the evil spirit of melancholy. It was a distinguished honour to Barnabas to be called "the son of consolation"; nay, it is one of the illustrious names of a greater than Barnabas, for the Lord Jesus is "the consolation of Israel." "Everlasting consolation"—here is the cream of all, for the eternity of comfort is the crown and glory of it. What is this "everlasting consolation"? It includes a sense of pardoned sin. A Christian man has received in his heart the witness of the Spirit that his iniquities are put away like a cloud, and his transgressions like a thick cloud. If sin be pardoned, is not that an everlasting consolation? Next, the Lord gives his people an abiding sense of acceptance in Christ. The Christian knows that God looks upon him as standing in union with Jesus. Union to the risen Lord is a consolation of the most abiding order; it is, in fact, everlasting. Let sickness prostrate us, have we not seen hundreds of believers as happy in the weakness of disease as they would have been in the strength of hale and blooming health? Let death's arrows pierce us to the heart, our comfort dies not, for have not our ears full often heard the songs of saints as they have rejoiced because the living love of God was shed abroad in their hearts in dying moments? Yes, a sense of acceptance in the Beloved is an everlasting consolation. Moreover, the Christian has a conviction of his security. God has promised to save those who trust in Christ: the Christian does trust in Christ, and he believes that God will be as good as his word, and will save him. He feels that he is safe by virtue of his being bound up with the person and work of Jesus.

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**J C Philpot** - When the Lord is pleased to apply a promise, drop in a word of encouragement, speak home an invitation with power, He administers thereby consolation. It comforts the drooping heart; it speaks peace to a guilty conscience. And this consolation is "everlasting consolation;" for it flows from nothing less than such a source, viz. the eternal love of God; and flows onward to an everlasting ocean of infinite delight. Any intimation of an interest in the everlasting love of God is a blessing beyond all price; for the Lord never gives any such intimation but as a certain pledge, earnest, and foretaste of immortal bliss. He can neither disappoint nor deceive. Once blest, blest for ever. We may indeed for a long time together cease to enjoy the comfort, and even may fall into the greatest depths of darkness and confusion, so as to lose sight of almost all our evidences; but the foundation of God standeth sure: "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19). The river of eternal love may seem to flow by and not reach our breast, so high are the banks and hidden out of sight the stream. Still if ever it has watered our soul it will be one day "waters to swim in" of eternal delight.

## Our Hope! J C Ryle

From Chapter 4 of his book [Old Paths](#)

"Good hope through grace." 2 Thess. 2:16

"The hope of the ungodly shall perish." Job 8:13

"For what is the hope of the godless, when he is cut off, when God takes away his life?" Job 27:8

"I hope," is a very common expression. Everybody can say, "I hope." About no subject is the expression used so commonly as it is about religion. Nothing is more common than to hear people turn off some home-thrust at conscience, by this convenient form of words, "I hope." "I hope it will be all right at last." "I hope I shall be a better man some day." "I hope I shall get to heaven at last." But why do they hope? On what is their hope built? Too often they cannot tell you! Too often it is a mere excuse for avoiding a disagreeable subject. "Hoping," they live on. "Hoping," they grow old. "Hoping," they die at last—and find too often that they are lost forever in hell!

I ask the serious attention of all who read this paper. The subject is one of the deepest importance, "We are saved by hope." (Rom. 8:24.) Let us, then, make sure that our hope is sound. Have we a hope that our sins are pardoned, our hearts renewed, and our souls at peace with God? Then let us see to it that our hope is "good," and "living," and one "that makes not ashamed." (2 Thess. 2:16; 1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 5:5.) Let us consider our ways. Let us not shrink from honest, searching inquiry into the condition of our souls. If our hope is good, examination will do it no harm. If our hope is bad, it is high time to know it, and to seek a better one.

There are five marks of a really "good hope." I desire to place them before my readers in order. Let us ask ourselves what we know



of them. Let us prove our own state by them. Happy is he who can say of each of these marks, "I know it by experience. This is my hope about my soul."

I. In the first place, **a good hope is a hope that a man can explain.** What says the Scripture? "Be ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason of the hope that is in you." (1 Pet. 3:15.)

If our hope is sound we must be able to give some account of it. We must be able to show why, and therefore, and on what grounds, and for what reason we expect to go to heaven when we die. Now can we do this?

Let no one misunderstand my meaning. I do not say that deep learning and great *knowledge* are absolutely needful to salvation. A man may know twenty languages, and have the whole body of divinity at his fingers' ends, and yet be lost; a man may be unable to read, and have a very weak understanding, and yet be saved. But I do say that a man must know *what* his hope is, and be able to tell us its nature. I cannot believe that a man has got possession of a thing if he knows nothing about it.

Once more, let no one misunderstand my meaning. I do not say that a power of *talking* well is necessary to salvation. There may be many fine words on a man's lips, and not a whit of grace in his heart; there may be few and stammering words, and yet deep feeling within, planted there by the Holy Spirit. There are some who cannot speak many words for Christ, and yet would die for Him. But for all this, I do say that the man who has a good hope ought to be able to tell us *why*. If he can tell us no more than this, that "he feels himself a sinner, and has no hope but in Christ," it is something. But if he can tell us nothing at all, I must suspect that he has got no real hope.

I am aware that the opinion just expressed displeases many. Thousands can see no necessity for that clear knowledge which I believe to be essential to a saving hope. So long as a man goes to church on Sunday, and has his children baptized, they think we ought to be content. "Knowledge," they tell us, "may be very well for clergymen and professors of theology; but it is too much to require it of common people."

My answer to all such people is short and simple. Where in the whole New Testament shall we find that people were called Christians, unless they knew something of Christianity? Will anyone try to persuade me that a Corinthian Christian, or a Colossian, or Thessalonian, or Philippian, or Ephesian, could not have told us what was his hope about his soul? Let those believe it who will—I, for one, cannot. I believe that in requiring a man to know the ground of his hope I am only setting up the standard of the New Testament. Ignorance may suit a Roman Catholic well enough. He belongs to what he considers to be the true Church! He does as his priest tells him! He asks no more! But ignorance ought never to be the characteristic of a Christian. He ought to know what he believes, and if he does not know he is in a bad way.

I ask every reader of this paper to search his heart, and see how the matter stands with his soul. Can you tell us nothing more than this, that "you hope to be saved"? Can you give no explanation of the grounds of your confidence? Can you show us nothing more satisfactory than your own vague expectation? If this be the case you are in imminent peril of being lost forever. Like Ignorance, in Pilgrim's Progress, you may get to your journey's end, and be ferried by Vainhope over the river, without much trouble. But, like Ignorance, you may find to your sorrow that there is no admission for you into the celestial city. None enter in there but those who "know what as well as whom they have believed."

"Now, while I was gazing upon all these things, I turned my head to look back, and saw Ignorance coming up to the riverside—but he soon got over, and that without half the difficulty which the other two men met with. For it happened that there was then in that place one Vainhope, a ferry-man, that with his boat helped him over; so he, as the other I saw, did ascend the hill to come up to the gate, only he came alone; neither did any man meet him with the least encouragement. When he was come up to the gate, he looked up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him. But he was asked by the man that looked over the top of the gate, 'Whence come you? And what would you have?' He answered, 'I have ate and drank in the presence of the King, and He has taught in our streets.' Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the King. So he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, 'Have you none?' But the man answered never a word.

"So they told the King; but He would not come down to see him—but commanded the two shining ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the City, to take Ignorance and bind him hand and foot, and take him away. Then they took him up, and carried him through the air to the door that I saw in the side of the hill, and put him in there. Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the gate of heaven, as well as from the city of destruction."—*Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*.

I lay down this principle as a starting point, and I ask my readers to consider it well. I admit most fully that there are different degrees of grace among true Christians. I do not forget that there are many in the family of God whose faith is very weak, and whose hope is very small. But I believe confidently, that the standard of requirement I have set up, is not a whit too high. I believe that the man who has a "good hope" will always be able to give some account of it.

**II. In the second place, a good hope is a hope that is drawn from Scripture.** What says David? "I hope in Your word." "Remember the word unto Your servant, upon which You have caused me to hope." What says Paul? "Whatever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." (Psalm 119:81, 49. Rom. 15:4.)

If our hope is sound we ought to be able to turn to some text, or fact, or doctrine of God's Word, as the source of it. Our confidence must arise from something which God has caused to be written in the Bible for our learning, and which our heart has received and believed.

**It is not enough to have good feelings about the state of our souls.** We may flatter ourselves that all is right, and that we are going to heaven when we die, and yet have nothing to show for our expectations but mere fancy and imagination. "The heart is deceitful above all things." "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool." (Jer. 17:9. Prov. 28:26.) I have frequently heard dying people say that "they felt quite happy and ready to go." I have heard them say that "they felt as if they craved nothing in this world." And all this time I have remarked that they were profoundly ignorant of Scripture, and seemed unable to lay firm hold on a single truth of the Gospel! I never can feel comfort about such people. I am persuaded that there is something wrong in their condition. Good feelings, without some warrant of Scripture, do not make up a good hope.

**It is not enough to have the good opinion of others about the state of our souls.** We may be told by others on our death beds, to "keep up our spirits," and "not to be afraid." We may be reminded that we have "lived good lives—or had a good heart—or done nobody any harm—or not been so bad as many." And all this time our friends may not bring forward a word of Scripture, and may be feeding us poison! Such friends are miserable comforters. However well meaning, they are downright enemies to our souls. The good opinion of others, without the warrant of God's Word, will never make up a good hope.

If a man would know the soundness of his own hope, let him search and look within his heart for some text or doctrine, or fact out of God's book. There will always be some one or more on which your soul hangs, if you are a true child of God. The dying thief in London, who was visited by a City Missionary, and found utterly ignorant of Christianity, laid hold on one single fact in a chapter of Luke's Gospel which was read to him, and found comfort in it. That fact was the story of the penitent thief. "Sir," he said, when visited the second time, "are there any more thieves in that book from which you read yesterday?" The dying Hindu who was found by a missionary on a roadside, had grasped one single text in the First Epistle of John, and found in it peace. That text was the precious saying, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, CLEANSSES us from all sin." (1 John 1:7.) This is the experience of all true Christians. Unlearned, humble, poor, as many of them are, they have got hold of something in the Bible, and this causes them to hope. The hope which "takes not ashamed" is never separate from God's Word.

People wonder sometimes that ministers press them so strongly to read the Bible. They marvel that we say so much about the importance of preaching, and urge them so often to hear sermons. Let them cease to wonder, and marvel no more. Our object is to make you acquainted with God's Word. We want you to have a good hope, and we know that a good hope must be drawn from the Scriptures. Without reading or hearing you must live and die in ignorance. Hence we cry, "Search the Scriptures." "Hear, and your soul shall live." (John 5:39. Isa. 55:3.)

I warn everyone to beware of a hope not drawn from Scripture. It is a false hope, and many will find out this to their cost. That glorious and perfect book, the Bible, however people despise it, is the only fountain out of which man's soul can derive peace. Many sneer at the old book while living, who find their need of it when dying. The Queen in her palace and the pauper in the workhouse, the philosopher in his study and the child in the cottage—each and all must be content to seek living water from the Bible, if they are to have any hope at all. Honor your Bible—read your Bible—stick to your Bible. There is not on earth a scrap of solid hope for the other side of the grave which is not drawn out of the Word.

**III. In the third place, a good hope is a hope that rests entirely on Jesus Christ.** What says Paul to Timothy? He says that Jesus Christ "is our hope." What says he to the Colossians? He speaks of "Christ in you the hope of glory." (1 Tim. 1:1; Coloss. 1:27.)

The person who has a good hope founds all his expectations of pardon and salvation on the mediation and redeeming work of Jesus, the Son of God. He knows his own sinfulness; he feels that he is guilty, wicked, and lost by nature—but he sees forgiveness and peace with God offered freely to him through faith in Christ. He accepts the offer—he casts himself with all his sins on Jesus, and rests on Him. Jesus and His atonement on the cross—Jesus and His righteousness—Jesus and His finished work—Jesus and His all-prevailing intercession—Jesus, and Jesus only, is the foundation of the confidence of his soul.

Let us beware of supposing that any hope is good which is not founded on Christ. All other hopes are built on sand. They may look well in the summer time of health and prosperity—but they will fail in the day of sickness and the hour of death. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11.)

Church-membership is no foundation of hope. We may belong to the best of Churches, and yet never belong to Christ. We may fill

our pew regularly every Sunday, and hear the sermons of orthodox, ordained clergymen, and yet never hear the voice of Jesus, or follow Him. If we have nothing better than Church-membership to rest upon we are in a poor plight—we have nothing solid beneath our feet.

Reception of the sacraments is no foundation of hope. We may be washed in the waters of baptism, and yet know nothing of the water of life. We may go to the Lord's table every Sunday of our lives, and yet never eat Christ's body and drink Christ's blood by faith. Miserable indeed is our condition if we can say nothing more than this! We possess nothing but the outside of Christianity—we are leaning on a reed.

Christ Himself is the only true foundation of a good hope. He is the rock, His work is perfect. He is the stone—the sure stone, the tried corner-stone. He is able to bear all the weight that we can lay upon Him. He only that builds and "believes on Him shall not be confounded." (Deut. 32:4; Isa. 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6.)

This is the point on which all true saints of God in every age have been entirely agreed. Differing on other matters, they have always been of one mind upon this. Unable to see alike about Church-government, and discipline, and liturgies, they have ever seen alike about the foundation of hope. Not one of them has ever left the world trusting in his own righteousness. Christ has been all their confidence—they have hoped in Him, and not been ashamed.

"Consider how it is with the most holy and eminent saints when dying. Did you ever see or hear any boasting of their own works and performances? They may, and do own to the praise of His grace, what they have been made to be, what they have been helped to do or allow for Christ's sake. But when they draw near to the solemn tribunal, what else is in their eye and heart—but only free grace, ransoming blood, and a well-ordered covenant in Christ the surety? They cannot bear to have any make mention to them of their holiness, their own grace, and attainments.

"He is a wise and happy man that can anchor his soul on that rock on which he can ride out the storm of death. Why should people contend for that in their life that they know they must renounce at their death? or neglect that truth now, that they must betake themselves unto then? It is a great test of the truth of the doctrine about the way of salvation when it is generally approved by sensible dying people."—*Traill*.

Would anyone like to know what kind of death-beds a minister of the Gospel finds comfort in attending? Would you know what closing scenes are cheering to us, and leave favorable impressions on our minds? We like to see dying people making much of Christ. So long as they can only talk of "the Almighty," and "Providence," and "God," and "mercy," we must stand in doubt. Dying in this state, they give no satisfactory sign. Give us the men and women who feel their sins deeply, and cling to Jesus, who think much of His dying love—who like to hear of His atoning blood—who return again and again for the story of His cross. These are the death-beds which leave good evidence behind them. For my part I had rather hear the name of Jesus come heartily from a dying relative's lips, than see him die without a word about Christ, and then be told by an angel that he was saved.

The dying words of Mr. Ash, the Puritan, are well-deserving of notice. He said, "When I consider my best duties, I sink, I die, I despair. But when I think of Christ, I have enough. He is all and in all."

The words of Mr. Cecil shortly before his death are very remarkable. He said, "I know myself to be a wretched, worthless sinner, having nothing in myself but poverty and sin. I know Jesus Christ to be a glorious and almighty Savior. I see the full efficacy of His atonement and grace; and I cast myself entirely on Him, and wait at His footstool." A short time before his decease he requested one of his family to write down for him the following sentence in a book, "'None but Christ, none but Christ,' said Lambert, dying at a stake—the same in dying circumstances, with his whole heart, says Richard Cecil."

**IV.** In the fourth place, **a good hope is a hope that is felt inwardly in the heart.** What says Paul? He speaks of "hope that makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." He speaks of "rejoicing in hope." (Rom. 5:5; 12:12.)

The man who has a good hope is conscious of it. He feels within him something that another man does not—he is conscious of possessing a well-grounded expectation of good things to come. This consciousness may vary exceedingly in different people. In one it may be strong and well-defined; in another it may be feeble and indistinct. It may vary exceedingly in different stages of the same person's experience. At one time he may be full of "joy and peace in believing;" at another he may be depressed and cast down. But in all people who have a "good hope," in a greater or less degree, this consciousness does exist.

I am aware that this truth is one which has been fearfully abused and perverted. It has been brought into great disrepute by the fanaticism, enthusiasm, and extravagance of some professing Christians. Mere animal excitement has been mistaken for the work of the Holy Spirit. The over-wrought feelings of weak and nervous people have been prematurely and rashly supposed to be the result of grace. Men and women have been hastily pronounced "converted," who have soon gone back to the world, and proved utterly "unconverted" and dead in sins. And then has come in the devil. Contempt has been poured on religious feelings of every description—their very existence has been denied and scouted; and the result is that the very name of "feelings" in religion is in

many quarters dreaded and disliked.

**But the abuse and perversion of a truth, must never be allowed to rob us of the use of it.** When all has been said that can be said against fanaticism and enthusiasm, it is still undeniable that religious feelings are plainly spoken of and described in Scripture. The Word of God tells us that the true Christian has "peace," and "rest," and "joy," and "confidence." It tells us of some who have the "witness of the Spirit"—of some who "fear no evil"—of some who enjoy "assurance"—of some who "know whom they have believed"—of some who "are persuaded that they shall never be separated from the love of God in Christ." These are the feelings for which I contend—this is that sober, inward experience in which I see nothing extravagant, enthusiastic, or fanatical. Of such feelings I say boldly, no man need be ashamed. I go further, and say that no man has a "good hope" who does not know *something*, however faintly, of these feelings in his own heart. I go further still, and say that to hold any other doctrine is to cast dishonor on the whole work of the Holy Spirit.

Will anyone tell us that God ever intended a true Christian to have no inward consciousness of his own Christianity? Will anyone say that the Bible teaches that people can pass from death to life, be pardoned, renewed, and sanctified, and yet feel nothing of this mighty change within? Let those think it who will—I can hold no such doctrine. I would as soon believe that Lazarus did not know that he was raised from the grave, or Bartimeus that he was restored to sight—as believe that a man cannot feel within him the Spirit of God.

Can a weary man lie down in bed—and not feel rested? Can the parched traveler in an African desert drink cool water—and not feel refreshed? Can the shivering sailor, in Arctic regions, draw near to the fire—and not feel warmed? Can the half-naked, hungry, homeless wanderer in our streets be clothed, fed, and housed—and not feel comforted? Can the fainting sick man receive the healing cordial—and not feel revived? I cannot believe it. I believe that in each case something will be felt. Just so I cannot believe that a man can be a true Christian if he does not feel *something* within. A new birth, a pardon of sins, a conscience sprinkled with Christ's blood, an indwelling of the Holy Spirit—are no such small matters as people seem to suppose. He who knows anything of them will feel them. There will be a real, distinct witness in his inward man.

Let us beware of a hope that is not felt, and a Christianity that is destitute of any inward experience. They are idols of the present day, and idols before which thousands are bowing down. Thousands are trying to persuade themselves that people may be born again, and have the Spirit, and yet not be sensible of it—or that people may be members of Christ, and receive benefit from Him, who have neither faith nor love towards His name. These are the favorite doctrines of modern days! These be the gods which have taken the place of Diana and Mercury, and "the image which fell down from Jupiter!" These be the last new deities invented by poor, weak, idolatrous man! From all such idols let us keep ourselves with jealous care. Golden as their heads may be—their feet are no better than clay! They cannot stand—they must, sooner or later, break down. Miserable indeed are the prospects of those who worship them! Their hope is not the hope of the Bible—it is the hope of a dead corpse. Where Christ and the Spirit are their presence will *be felt!*

Can anyone in his senses suppose that the apostle Paul would have been content with Christians who knew nothing of inward feelings? Can we imagine that mighty man of God sanctioning a religion which a person might have, and yet experience nothing within? Can we picture to ourselves a member of one of the Churches he founded, who was utterly unacquainted with peace, or joy, or confidence towards God, and was yet approved by the great apostle as a true believer! Away with the idea! It will not bear reflection for a moment. The testimony of Scripture is plain and explicit. Talk as people will about enthusiasm and excitement, there are such things as *feelings* in religion. The Christian who knows nothing of them is not yet converted, and has everything to learn. The cold marble of a Grecian statue may well be unimpassioned. The dried mummy from Egypt may well look stiff and still. The stuffed beast in a museum may well be motionless and cold. They are all lifeless things. But where there is life there will always be some feeling. The "good hope" is a hope that can be felt.

**V. In the last place, a good hope is a hope that is manifested outwardly in the life.** Once more, what says the Scripture? "Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure." (1 John 3:3.) The man who has a good hope will show it in all his ways. It will influence his life, his character, and his daily conduct; it will make him strive to be a holy, godly, conscientious, spiritual man. He will feel under a constant obligation to serve and please Him from whom his hope comes. He will say to himself, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?" He will feel, "I am bought with a price—let me glorify God with body and spirit, which are His." "Let me show forth the praises of Him who has called me out of darkness into His marvelous light." Let me prove that I am Christ's friend, "by keeping His commandments." (Psalm 116:12; 1 Cor 6:20; 1 Peter 2:9; John 15:14.)

This is a point which has been of infinite importance in every age of the Church. It is a truth which is always assailed by Satan, and needs guarding with jealous care. Let us grasp it firmly, and make it a settled principle in our religion. If there is light in a house it will shine through the windows—if there is any real hope in a man's soul it will be seen in his ways. Show me your hope in your life and daily behavior. Where is it? Wherein does it appear? If you cannot show it, you may be sure it is nothing better than a delusion and a snare.

The times demand a very distinct testimony from all ministers on this subject. The truth on this point requires very plain speaking. Let us settle it in our minds deeply, and beware of letting it go. Let no man deceive us with vain words. "He that does righteousness is righteous." "He that says he abides in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (1 John 2:6; 3:7.) The hope that does not make a man honest, honorable, truthful, sober, diligent, unselfish, loving, meek, kind, and faithful in all the relations of life, is not from God. It is only "the talk of the lips which tends to poverty." "He that boasts himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain." (Prov. 14:23; 25:14.)

## FALSE HOPES

(a) There are some in the present day who flatter themselves they have a good hope because they possess **religious knowledge**. They are acquainted with the letter of their Bibles; they can argue and dispute about points of doctrine—they can quote texts by the score, in defense of their own theological opinions. They are perfect Benjamites in controversy—they can "sling stones at an hair-breadth, and not miss." (Judges 20:16.) And yet they have no fruits of the Spirit, no love, no meekness, no gentleness, no humility, nothing of the mind that was in Christ. And have these people a true hope? Let those believe it who will, I dare not say so. I hold with Paul, "If I speak the languages of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I donate all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind. Love does not envy; is not boastful; is not conceited; does not act improperly; is not selfish; is not provoked; does not keep a record of wrongs; finds no joy in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Yes—hope without love is no hope at all.

(b) There are some again who presume to think they have a good hope because of *God's everlasting election*. They boldly persuade themselves that they were once called and chosen of God to salvation. They take it for granted that there was once a real work of the Spirit on their hearts, and that all therefore must be well. They look down upon others, who are afraid of professing as much as they do. They seem to think, "We are the people of God, we are the temple of the Lord, we are the favored servants of the Most High—we are those who shall reign in heaven, and none beside." And yet these very people can lie, and cheat, and swindle, and be dishonorable! Some of them can even get drunk in private, and secretly commit sins of which it is a shame to speak! And have they a good hope? God forbid that I should say so! The election which is not "unto sanctification" is not of God—but of the devil. The hope that does not make a man holy is no hope at all.

(c) There are some in this day who fancy they have a good hope because **they like hearing the Gospel**. They are fond of hearing good sermons. They will go miles to listen to some favorite preacher, and will even weep and be much affected by his words. To see them in church one would think, "Surely these are the disciples of Christ, surely these are excellent Christians!" And yet these very people can plunge into every folly and gaiety of the world. Night after night they can go with their whole heart to the opera, the theater, or the ball. They are to be seen on the race-course. They are advanced in every worldly revel. Their voice on Sunday is the voice of Jacob—but their hands on week days are the hands of Esau. And have these people a good hope? I dare not say so. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God;" the hope that does not prevent conformity to the world, is no hope at all. "Whoever is born of God overcomes the world." (James 4:4; 1 John 5:4.)

Let us beware of any hope that does not exercise a sanctifying influence over our hearts, lives, tastes, conduct, and conversation. It is a hope that never came down from above. It is mere base metal, and counterfeit coin. It lacks the mint-stamp of the Holy Spirit, and will never pass current in heaven. The man that has a real hope, no doubt, may be overtaken in a fault; He may stumble occasionally in his practice, and be drawn aside from the right path for a while. But the person who can allow himself in any willful and *habitual* breach of God's law, is rotten at the heart. He may talk of his hope as much as he pleases—but he has none in reality. His religion is a joy to the devil, a stumbling block to the world, a sorrow to true Christians, and an offence to God. Oh, that people would consider these things! Oh, that many would use some such prayer as this, "From antinomianism and hypocrisy, good Lord, deliver me!"

I have now done what I proposed to do. I have shown the five leading marks of a sound good hope.

- (1) It is a hope that a man can explain.
- (2) It is a hope that is drawn from Scripture.
- (3) It is a hope that is founded on Christ.
- (4) It is a hope that is felt within the heart.
- (5) It is a hope that is manifested outwardly in the life.

Such, I firmly believe is the hope of all true Christians, of every name, and Church, and denomination, and people, and tongue. Such is the hope that we must have, if we mean to go to heaven. Such is the hope without which, I firmly believe, no man can be saved.

Such is "the good hope through grace."

Allow me now to **APPLY** the whole subject to the conscience of every reader in a practical way. What shall it profit us to know truths unless we use them? What shall it avail us to see the real nature of a good hope unless the matter be brought home to our own souls? This is what I now propose to do, if God permits, in the remainder of this paper. May the Spirit of God apply my words to the heart of every reader of these pages with mighty power! **Man may speak, and preach, and write—but God alone can convert!**

(1) My first word of application shall be a **QUESTION**. I offer it to all who read this paper, and I entreat each reader to give it an answer. That question is, "What is your own hope about your soul?"

I do not ask this out of idle curiosity. I ask it as an ambassador for Christ, and a friend to your best interests. I ask it in order to stir up self-inquiry, and promote your spiritual welfare. I ask, "What is your hope about your soul?"

I do not want to know whether you go to church or chapel—there will be no account of these differences in heaven. I do not want to know whether you approve of the Gospel, and think it very right and proper that people should have their religion, and say their prayers; all this is beside the mark—it is not the point. The point I want you to look at is this, "What is your hope about your soul?"

It matters nothing what your relations think. It matters nothing what other people in the parish or town approve. The account of God will not be taken by towns, or by parishes, or by families—each must stand forth separately and answer for himself. "Everyone of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12.) And what is the defense you mean to set up? What is to be your plea? "What is your hope about your soul?"

Time is short, and is passing quickly away—in a few years, we shall be all dead and gone! The trees perhaps are cut down out of which our coffins will be made—the shrouds perhaps are woven which will surround our bodies—the spades perhaps are made which will dig our graves. Eternity draws near! There ought to be no trifling. "What, what is your hope about your soul?"

Another world will soon begin. Trade, politics, money, lands, cottages, palaces, eating, drinking, dressing, reading, playing, working, dancing, feasting—will soon be at an end forever. There will remain nothing but a heaven for some, and a hell for others! "What, what is your hope about your soul?"

I have asked my question. And now I ask every reader as in the sight of God, *What is your reply?*

Many would say—if they spoke the truth, "I don't know anything about it. I suppose I am not what I ought to be. I dare say I ought to have more religion than I have. I trust I shall have more some day. But as to any hope at present—I really don't know!"

I can quite believe that this is the state of many. I have seen enough of the spiritual ignorance of people to fill me with deep sorrow. I am convinced that there is no error, or heresy, or *"ism,"* which is ruining so many souls as the heresy of ignorance. I am convinced that there are myriads of professors in England who do not even know the A B C's of Christianity, and are nothing better than **baptized heathen!** I have heard of a man, in his last days, whose only hope was, "that he had always kept his Church, and voted for the Blues." I have heard of a woman, who was asked on her death-bed where she hoped to go, and said, "She hoped she should go with the crowd." I have little doubt that there are thousands of people in this country who are much in the same condition, knowing nothing whatever about their state before God. If this be the condition of any reader of this paper, I can only say, May God convert you! May God awaken you! May God open your eyes before it is too late!

"When we deal with the carnal, secure, careless sinners (and they are a vast multitude), and ask them a reason of that hope of heaven they pretend to, is not this their common answer, "I live inoffensively; I keep God's law as well as I can; whenever I fail, I repent, and beg God's mercy for Christ's sake—my heart is sincere, though my knowledge and attainments be short of others." If we go on further to inquire what acquaintance they have with Jesus Christ? what application their souls have made to Him? what workings of faith on Him? what use they have made of His righteousness for justification, and of His Spirit for sanctification? what they know of living by faith on Jesus Christ?—we seem to be barbarians to them! And in this sad state thousands in England live, and die, and perish eternally. Yet so thick is the darkness of the age, that many of them live here and go hence with the reputation of good Christians; and some of them may have their funeral sermon and praise preached by an ignorant flattering minister; though it may be the poor creatures did never, in the whole course of their lives, nor at their deaths, employ Jesus Christ so much for any entry to heaven, purchased by His blood and accessible by faith in Him—as a poor Turk does Mahomet for a room in his beastly paradise!"—Traill.

Look at that man who goes to the Bank of England on a dividend day, and asks to be paid a large sum of money. Is his name down among the list of people to be paid? No!—Has he any title or right to claim payment? No! He has none! He only knows that other people are receiving money, and that he would like to receive some too. You know well that you would call the man "out of his mind;" you would say he was nothing better than a madman. But stop! Take care what you are saying! You are the real madman, if you mean to claim heaven at last, when you have no title, no warrant, no ground of hope to show. Once more, I say—May God open

your eyes!

But many, I believe, would reply to my question that "they have hope." They would say, "I am not as bad as some, at any rate. I am no heathen. I am no infidel. I have some hope about my soul."

If this be your case, I beseech you to consider calmly what your hope really is. I entreat you not to be content with saying, like a parrot, "I hope—I hope—I hope;" but to examine seriously into the nature of your confidence, and to make sure that it is well-founded. Is it a hope you can explain? Is it scriptural? Is it built on Christ? Is it felt in your heart? Is it sanctifying to your life? All is not gold that glitters. I have warned you already that there is a false hope as well as a true hope—I offer the warning again. I beseech you to take heed that you be not deceived. Beware of mistakes.

There are ships lying quietly in London docks, about to sail for every part of the globe. They all look equally trustworthy, so long as they are in harbor; they have all equally good names, and are equally well-rigged and painted—but they are not all equally well-built and equally safe. Once let them put to sea, and meet with rough weather, and the difference between the sound and unsound ships will soon appear. Many a ship which looked well in dock has proved not sea-worthy when she got into deep water, and has gone down at last with all hands on board! Just so it is with many a false hope. It has failed completely, when most needed—it has broken down at last, and ruined its possessor's soul. You will soon have to put to sea. I say again, beware of mistakes!

I leave my question here. I earnestly pray that God may apply it to the hearts of all who read this paper. I am sure it is much needed. I believe there never was a time when there was so much counterfeit religion current, and so many "false hopes" passing off for true. There never was a time when there was so much high profession, and so little spiritual practice, so much loud talk about preachers, and parties, and Churches, and so little close walking with God, and real work of the Spirit. There is no lack of blossoms in Christendom—but there is a melancholy scarcity of ripe fruit. There is an abundance of controversial theology—but a dearth of practical holiness. There are myriads who have a name to live—but few whose hearts are really given to Jesus Christ—few whose affections are really set on things above. There will be some awful failures yet in many quarters—there will be still more awful disclosures at the last day. There are many hopes now-a-days, which are utterly destitute of foundation. I say, for the last time, Beware of mistakes.

(2) My second word of application shall be a **REQUEST**. I make it to all readers of this paper who feel they have no hope and desire to have it. It is a short simple request. I entreat them to seek "a good hope" while it can be found.

A good hope is within the reach of any man, if he is only willing to seek it. It is called emphatically in Scripture, a "good hope through grace." It is freely offered, even as it was freely purchased—it may be freely obtained, "without money and without price." Our past lives do not make it impossible to obtain it, however bad they may have been; our present weaknesses and infirmities do not shut us out, however great they may be. The same grace which provided mankind with a hope, makes a free, full, and unlimited invitation. "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find." (Rev. 22:17; Matt. 7:7.)

The Lord Jesus Christ is able and willing to give "a good hope" to all who really want it. He is sealed and appointed by God the Father to give the bread of life to all who hunger, and the water of life to all who thirst. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." (Coloss. 1:19.) In Him there is pardon and peace with God, bought by the precious blood which He shed upon the cross. In Him there is joy and peace for any believer, and a solid, well-grounded expectation of good things to come. In Him there is rest for the weary, refuge for the fearful, a cleansing fountain for the unclean, medicine for the sick, healing for the broken-hearted, and hope for the lost. Whoever feels laboring and heavy-laden with sin, whoever feels anxious and distressed about his soul, whoever feels afraid of death and unfit to die—whoever he is, *let him go to Christ and trust in Him*. This is the thing to be done—this is the way to follow. Whoever wants "hope," let him go to Christ.

If any reader of this paper really wants to enjoy a good hope, let him seek it from the Lord Jesus Christ. There is every encouragement to do so. The Thessalonians in old time were, like the Ephesians, dead in trespasses and sins, having no hope, and without God in the world; but when Paul preached Jesus to them, they arose from their miserable state and became new people. God gave them a "good hope through grace." The door through which Manasseh and Magdalene entered, is still open! The fountain in which Zacchaeus and Matthew were washed, is still unsealed! Seek hope from Christ, and you shall find it.

Seek it *honestly, and with no secret reserve*. The ruin of many is that they are not fair and straightforward. They say that they "try as much as they can," and that they really "want to be saved," and that they really "look to Christ;" and yet in the chamber of their own heart there lies some darling sin, to which they privately cling, and are resolved not to give it up. They are like Augustine, who said, "Lord convert me—but not now." Seek honestly, if you wish to find a good hope.

Seek it in *humble prayer*. Pour out your heart before the Lord Jesus, and tell Him all the needs of your soul. **Do as you would have done had you lived in Galilee eighteen hundred years ago, and had a leprosy—go directly to Christ, and lay before Him your cares!** Tell Him that you are a poor, sinful creature—but that you have heard He is a gracious Savior, and that you come to Him for "hope" for your soul. Tell Him that you have nothing to say for yourself—no excuse to make, nothing of your own to plead—but

that you have heard that He "receives sinners," and as such you come to Him. (Luke 15:2.)

Seek it at once *without delay*. Halt no more between two opinions—do not linger another day. Cast away the remnants of pride which are still keeping you back—draw near to Jesus as a heavy-laden sinner, and "lay hold upon the hope set before you." (Heb. 6:18.) This is the point to which all must come at last if they mean to be saved. Sooner or later they must knock at the door of grace and ask to be admitted. Why not do it at once? Why stand still looking at the bread of life? Why not come forward and eat it? Why remain outside the city of refuge? Why not enter in and be safe? Why not seek hope at once, and never rest until you find it? Never did soul seek honestly in the way I have marked out, and fail to find.

The words of Traill on this point of coming to Christ by faith, deserve many thoughts. They throw light on a subject which is constantly misunderstood. He says, "When we come to deal with a poor, awakened sinner, who sees his lost estate, and that he is condemned by the law of God, we find the same principles (pride and ignorance) working in him. We see him sick and wounded—we tell him where his help lies, in Jesus Christ; and what his proper work is, to apply to Him by faith. What is his answer—'Alas,' says the man, 'I have been, and I am so vile a sinner, my heart is so bad, and so full of plagues and corruptions, that I cannot think of believing on Christ. But if I had but repentance, and some holiness in heart and life, and such and such gracious qualifications—I would then believe.' This his answer is as full of nonsense, ignorance and pride, as words can contain or express. It implies—

- (1) If I were pretty well recovered, I would employ the Physician, Christ.
- (2) There is some hope to work out these good things by myself, without Christ.
- (3) When I come to Christ with a price in my hand I shall be welcome.
- (4) I can come to Christ when I will.

So ignorant are people naturally of faith in Jesus Christ; and no words, or warnings, or plainest instructions can beat into men's heads and hearts that the first coming to Christ by faith, and believing on Him, is not a believing we shall be saved by Him—but a believing on Him, that we may be saved by Him."—*Traill's Works*.

(3) My last word of application shall be **COUNSEL**. I offer it to all who have really obtained "good hope through grace." I offer it to all who are really leaning on Christ, walking in the narrow way, and led by the Spirit of God. I ask them to accept advice from one who hopes that he is "their brother and companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9.) I believe the advice to be sound and good.

**(a) If you have a good hope be zealous and watchful over it.** Beware that Satan does not steal it away for a season, as he did from David and Peter. Beware that you do not lose sight of it by giving way to inconsistencies, and by conformity to the world. Examine it often, and make sure that it is not becoming dim. Keep it bright by daily carefulness over your temper, thoughts, and words. Keep it healthy by hearty, fervent, and continual prayer. The hope of the Christian is a very delicate plant. It is an exotic from above—it is not a plant of natural growth. It is easily chilled and nipped by the cold frosts of this world. Unless watered and tended carefully, it will soon dwindle away to a mere nothing, and scarcely be felt or seen. None find out this so painfully as dying believers who have not walked very closely with God. They find that they have sown thorns in their dying pillows, and brought clouds between themselves and the sun.

**(b) For another thing, if you have a good hope, keep it always ready.** Have it at your right hand, prepared for immediate use—look at it often, and take care that it is in good order. Trials often break in upon us suddenly, like an armed man. Sicknesses and injuries to our mortal frame sometimes lay us low on our beds without any warning. Happy is he who keeps his lamp well trimmed, and lives in the daily sense of communion with Christ!

Did you ever see a fire-engine in some old country house? Did you ever remark how often it lies for months in a dark shed, untouched, unexamined, and uncleaned? The valves are out of order; the leather hose is full of holes; the pumps are rusty and stiff. A house might be almost burnt to the ground before it could lift a pailful of water. In its present state it is a well-near useless machine.

Did you ever see a ship in dock at harbor? The hull may perhaps be good and sound; the keel and topsides, and timbers and beams, and decks may be all that you could desire. But she is not rigged, or stored, or armed, or fit for service. It would take weeks and months to make her ready for sea. In her present state she could do little for her country's defense. The hope of many a believer is like that fire-engine, and that ship. It exists, it lives, it is real, it is true, it is sound—it is good—it came down from heaven—it was implanted by the Holy Spirit. But, alas, *it is not ready for use!* Its possessor will find that out, by his own lack of joy and sensible comfort, when he comes to his death-bed. Beware that your hope be not a hope of this kind. If you have a hope keep it ready for use, and within reach of your hand.

**(c) For another thing, if you have a good hope, seek and pray that it may grow more and more strong every year.** Do not be



content with a "day of small things;" covet the best gifts—desire to enjoy full assurance. Strive to attain to Paul's standard, and to be able to say, "I know whom I have believed." "I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall separate me from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. 1:12; Rom. 8:38.)

Believe me, this part of my counsel is one that deserves close attention. Believe me, the things before us all will try our hope of what sort it is. Sickness and death are solemn things. They strip off all the tinsel and paint from a man's religion; they discover the weak places in our Christianity; they strain our hopes to the very uttermost, and often make us well near despair. Old Christian, in Pilgrim's Progress, had a sore trial at his latter end in crossing the cold river before he entered the celestial city. Faithful and true as he was, he still cried out, "All your billows go over me," and had a hard struggle to keep his footing. May we all lay this to heart! May we seek to *know and feel* that we are one with Christ and Christ in us! He that has hope does well; but he that has assurance does better. Blessed indeed are they who "abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15:13.)

**(d) Finally, if you have a good hope, be thankful for it, and give God daily praise.** Who has made you to differ from the perishing world around you? Why have you been taught to feel your sins, and nothingness, while others are ignorant and self-righteous? Why have you been taught to look to Jesus, while others are looking to their own goodness, or resting on some mere form of religion? Why are you longing and striving to be holy, while others are caring for nothing but this world? Why are these things so? There is but one answer, Grace, grace, free grace, has done it all. For that grace praise God. For that grace be thankful.

Go on, then, to your journey's end, "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5:2.) Go on, rejoicing in the thought that though you are a poor sinner Jesus is a most gracious Savior, and that though you have trials here for a little season, heaven shall soon make amends for all.

Go on, wearing hope as a helmet in all the battles of life—a hope of pardon, a hope of perseverance, a hope of acquittal in the judgment day, a hope of final glory. Put on the breast-plate of righteousness; take the shield of faith; have your loins girt about with truth; wield valiantly the sword of the Spirit. But never forget—as ever you would be a happy Christian—never forget to put on the "helmet of hope." (1 Thess. 5:8.)

Go on, in spite of an ill-natured world, and be not moved by its laughter or its persecution, its slanders or its sneers. Comfort your heart with the thought that the time is short, the good things yet to come, the night far spent, the "morning without clouds" at hand. (2 Sam. 23:4.) When the wicked man dies his expectation perishes; but your expectation shall not deceive you—your reward is sure.

Go on, and be not cast down because you are troubled by doubts and fears. You are yet in the body—this world is not your rest. The devil hates you because you have escaped from him, and he will do all he can to rob you of peace. The very fact that you have fears is an evidence that you feel you have something to lose. The true Christian may ever be discerned by his warfare—quite as much as by his peace; and by his fears—quite as much as by his hopes. The ships at anchor may swing to and fro with the tide, and pitch heavily in a south-eastern gale; but so long as their anchors hold the ground they ride safely, and have no cause to fear. The hope of the true Christian is the "anchor of his soul, sure and steadfast." (Heb. 6:19.) His heart may be tossed to and fro sometimes—but he is safe in Christ. The waves may swell, and lift him up and down—but he will not be wrecked.

Go on, and "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1:13.) Yet a little time, and faith shall be changed to sight, and hope to certainty—you shall see even as you have been seen, and know even as you have been known. A few more tossings to and fro on the waves of this troublesome world—a few more battles and conflicts with our spiritual enemy—a few more years of tears and partings, of working and suffering, of crosses and cares, of disappointments and vexations, and then—then we shall be at home! The harbor lights are already in view—the haven of rest is not far off. *There* we shall find all that we have hoped for, and find that it was a million times better than our hopes. *There* we shall find all the saints, and no sin, no cares of this world, no money, no sickness, no death, no devil. *There*, above all, we shall find Jesus, and be ever with the Lord! (1 Thess. 4:17.) Let us hope on. **It is worth while to carry the cross and follow Christ.** Let the world laugh and mock, if it will; it is worth while to have "a good hope through grace," and be a thorough decided Christian. I say again—Let us hope on!

## 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

Amplified Comfort and encourage your hearts and strengthen them [make them steadfast and keep them unswerving] in every good work and word.

Wuest encourage your hearts and stabilize them in the sphere of every good work and word.

BGT 2 Thessalonians 2:17 παρακαλῶσαι μὲν τὰς καρδίας καὶ στηρῆσαι ἐν παντί ἕκαστον ἐν ἑκάστῳ.

NET 2 Thessalonians 2:17 encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good thing you do or say.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say.  
 ESV 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.  
 NIV 2 Thessalonians 2:17 encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.  
 GNT 2 Thessalonians 2:17 παρακαλῶσαι μὲν τὰς καρδίας καὶ στηριξάειν πάντῃ καὶ λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ.  
 KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.  
 YLT 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.  
 ASV 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.  
 CSB 2 Thessalonians 2:17 encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good work and word.  
 NKJ 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

- **Comfort:** 2Th 2:16 Isa 51:3,12 57:15 61:1,2 66:13 Ro 15:13 2Co 1:3-6
- **strengthen your hearts :** 2Th 3:3 Isa 62:7 Ro 1:11 16:25 1Co 1:8 2Co 1:21 Col 2:7 1Th 3:2,13 Heb 13:9 1Pe 5:10 Jude 1:24
- **in every good work and word:** Jas 1:21,22 1Jn 3:18
- [2 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A PRAYER FOR OUR HEARTS

**Comfort and strengthen your hearts** - Both **comfort** and **strengthen** (make them steadfast and keep them unswerving) are in the [optative mood](#) which is the mood of prayer.

**THOUGHT** - This is a great prayer to intercede for our brethren whose hope is dimming and/or their faith is flagging and doubt is beginning to rear its ugly head! They are in need of fervent intercession using a prayer like 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17.

Paul had used the same verb (*sterizo*) twice in his first letter (out of only 14 total uses in NT). It is as if Paul knew the danger of persecutions and affliction to cause one's faith to destabilize and so he encourages them with this verb (once in sending a person and then in sending a prayer)...

(1 Th 3:2+) and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to **strengthen** ([sterizo](#)) and encourage you as to your faith,

(1 Th 3:11-13+) (A PRAYER) Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; 12 and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; 13 so that He may **establish** ([sterizo](#)) your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

**THOUGHT** - O that we would pray more like Paul. How often we pray for temporal needs (physical, financial, etc) which are not bad, but which fall short of praying for spiritual needs and spiritual growth. I have often wondered what God would do in a congregation that began to pray predominantly the prayers of Scripture, especially the Pauline prayers? I think we might just witness an Ephesians 3:20 type answer. If anyone reading this note begins to pray this way and begins to see Ephesians 3:20 answers, please let me know via the website email. I would be greatly encouraged and challenged!

**Comfort** (3870) ([parakaleo](#) from **para** = side of, alongside, beside + **kaleo** = call) means literally to call one alongside, to call someone to oneself, to call for, to summon. **Parakaleo** can include the idea of giving help or aid but the primary sense in the NT is to urge someone to take some action, especially some ethical course of action. Sometimes the word means convey the idea of comfort, sometimes of exhortation but always at the root there is the idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence and with gallantry.

**Strengthen** (4741) ([sterizo](#) from **histemi** = to stand as in 1 Pe 5:12 "stand firm in" the true grace of God. **Histemi** also root of "Resist" - *anthistemi* and of "firm" - *stereos*, both used by Peter in 1 Pe 5:9) means to make firm or solid, to set fast, to fix firmly in a place, to establish (make firm or stable), to cause to be inwardly firm or committed, to strengthen. The basic idea is that of stabilizing something by providing a support or buttress (a projecting structure of masonry or wood for supporting or giving stability to a wall or building), so that it will not totter.

**in every good work and word** - NET = "in every good thing you do or say." **Every** means no exceptions. One truth in this passage is that our works should match our words. Sadly our spiritual words belie our relatively unspiritual practice! And the lost world is watching, looking for authenticity in a society filled with lies and falsehoods.

**Good** is [agathos](#) which is a prayer that their works and words would both be beneficial, excellent, useful, etc. Ultimately our work and word will be most likely to be good when we abide in Jesus, Who taught "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5) Our work and word are "good" when they are initiated and enabled by the Spirit of Christ, for the glory of Christ.

**J C Philpot** - The living family of God need to be established in the truth, so as not ever to be "children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine." It is not sufficient for a building to be reared: it must be established before we can know whether it will stand. The most anxious moment of the builder is to see how it will settle; how the walls will bear the roof, and every part stand firm and good without bulging or slipping. When the centering is taken away from a newly-built arch, how the architect looks to see whether it will settle well and the extent of the drop, if there be any. So in grace. It is not merely making a profession that will serve. Many a building stands well as long as the scaffolding remains; many an arch looks firm whilst the centering supports it. So many seem to stand well in early days, when upheld by zeal and earnestness, or strengthened by the support of others. But how will the soul stand when helps are removed? Will it be established in the faith, or fall into some error or some gross evil, and thus, like an arch badly built, drop into ruin when the centering is taken away. How we continually see those who once seemed firm in the truth now greedily drinking down some deadly error presented to their lips under the charm of a plausible novelty; and others fall headlong into some open sin, or get entangled in some delusion. O that the Lord would stablish you, me, and all who desire to fear His name firmly and deeply in His precious truth, that we may never fall a prey to evil or error, but may have a religion of His own maintaining; that the work upon our heart may be the genuine work of God first and last; a building of His own raising and His own establishing, that it may stand firm amidst the storms of time, and endure for all eternity!

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