

# DISCIPLE'S QUEST

*If you continue in My word, then you are  
truly disciples of Mine.*

John 8:31

**August 11, 2024**

**What Must Precede the Day of the Lord**

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-15**

## **Main Idea:**

When Paul, Silas and Timothy planted the church at Thessalonica, the apostle himself taught the believers about the key end times events of the rapture of the church and the day of the Lord. But when persecution suddenly struck, forcing the missionaries to leave after the persecution of the believers intensified and unsettling confusion began to creep into the church.

Initially, there was some uncertainty among some of the Thessalonians about the extent of the participation of all believers in the Lord's gathering of His saints to Himself at the rapture. Their concern was that those who had passed from this life before the event might miss out on its full glory. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul strengthened them with the encouraging news that all would be equal participants. The dead in Christ, already with the Lord, will receive their resurrection bodies and those believers living at the time of the rapture will likewise receive theirs (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

After strengthening the Thessalonians with that good news, Paul reminded them of what he had previously taught them about the day of the Lord, which will follow the rapture. Their responsibility was to live as "sons of light and sons of day," eagerly anticipating the Lord's return for them at the rapture, confident that, unlike the unbelieving, they would not experience the wrath of the day of the Lord.

In the months after receiving Paul's first letter, however, the enemy intensified his attack on the Thessalonians by dispatching false teachers to the church with a confusing and frightening message. They insisted that without the rapture preceding it, God's Great Tribulation judgment had arrived. This was proven, they said, by the persecution and hardship the Thessalonians were experiencing, and some of the believers at least, were taken in by the deception and believed that they had been caught up in the day of the Lord!

That particular error occasioned Paul's writing his second inspired letter to the church. The false teaching had caused some to be shaken from their composure and disturbed, jeopardizing their continuing growth in spiritual maturity and their powerful testimony.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5 then, Paul exposes the false teaching and proves to the Thessalonians that they could not be in the day of the Lord. Beyond the fact that the rapture hadn't taken place, two additional things had not happened that must precede the day of the Lord – the man of lawlessness had not revealed, and the ultimate apostasy hadn't arrived.

**Outline:**

3 things that must precede the day of the Lord:

- 1) The rapture of the church
- 2) The revelation of the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction
- 3) THE apostasy

**Questions for further contemplation and application after the message:**

#1 Is it important to understand what the Bible teaches about the end times? Why?

#2 Scripture describes the rapture as the imminent (“at any time”) event that will precede the day of the Lord. How should the contemplation of the Lord’s return to gather us together to Him impact the way we live life each day?

#3 What effect should the contemplation of the day of the Lord have on our interactions with the unbelieving?