



**Doctrine: The Rapture of the Church
When is This Happening Again?
And What Do I Have to Look Forward to If I am Left Behind?
Part 7
Revelation 3:7-13
2 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

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Both good questions. After examining the doctrine of the rapture of the church and learning about the day of the Lord, those are both logical questions to be asked.



The Bible addresses both. But first the question of timing, the rapture is imminent, is it really before the Tribulation? Yes, it is really before the Tribulation.

This was confirmed for us by John and by Jesus Himself in His letter to the church in Philadelphia (in Turkey, not the US), dictated to John, which we find in Revelation 3.

Our Map

- John 14:1-3 Jesus - I go to prepare a place and will come back and get you.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 First the rapture.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Then the Day of the Lord.
- 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 Details about what the resurrection and the rapture looks like.
- **2 Thessalonians 2:3 First the apostasy. Then the Beast, antichrist, man of sin, etc. is revealed.**
- **Revelation 3:7-13 And the rapture is before the Tribulation.**

Revelation 3:7–13

““And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: ‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have followed My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept My word of perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of the testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who live on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB 2020)

The church in Philadelphia had a reputation of being a sending church. They took seriously the command of Jesus to make disciples.

As such, this church is a picture of the church evident during the late 18th century and continuing on into today. It has been during this time that great missionary outreaches intended to cover the planet began and continue even today.

This came rather naturally for those in the church there as the city had a history of spreading Hellenism and Greek thought throughout the region. When they heard about the Great Commission, they took that seriously and began to reach out with missionaries.

By the way, that is a desired response for all churches, to spread the gospel around the world.

Are we involved in that here at Calvary Chapel Martin County? Indeed, we are, and we want to do more. But for now, we have a podcast, The UnSafe Bible.

Right now, we are podcasting Monday – Friday on various platforms globally and have intentionally placed ourselves onto platforms that are designed for the audience in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan. We are also on a platform that allows us to be available in Arab speaking countries throughout the Middle East. We are podcasting the Bible, on English, Monday – Friday into Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Kuwait, Syria and more.



The intent is for teaching content to be available for our fellowship in small digestible chunks Monday through Friday. That is indeed how it is being used with the additional outreach taking place overseas as a bonus.

By the way, to do this is not free so all giving for this is indeed appreciated.

Please be praying for The UnSafe Bible podcast. We now have over 400 podcast episodes available to be listened to. The title of the podcast has allowed us to be in places difficult to get into for the gospel. But that isn't all we are doing.

Calvary Chapel Martin County also has two websites. We have the website for the church, Calvary Chapel Martin County, and we also have a website for The UnSafe Bible. That is the website that is receiving attention overseas. For example, it is being used for Bible study in Uganda, Pakistan and Nepal.

We have also placed our livestream of the Midweek Bible Study and the Online Campus for our Sunday services on our website, our app, yes, we also have an UnSafe Bible app as well as one for the church, YouTube, Facebook and Rumble. And on top of that, we are also now on Apple TV and Roku TV. Would we like to do more? Yes. And we are constantly looking for ways to reach the world with the gospel. The church at Philadelphia was a missionary church. They were a church that realized they had a little power thanks to their reliance on the Holy Spirit and it was a church intent on following the Lord in the midst of a culture that was mad.

At the time John wrote to the churches in Revelation, persecution for the church was a reality. All the disciples, except for John, had died a martyr's death by the time he was writing, and he was exiled on the island of Patmos by the Emperor. And here is this fellowship busy reaching out with the gospel wherever they could.

Jesus wants to encourage this church. He lets them know that He is the one keeping the door open for them for ministry and no one can shut that door. I mean, we are still talking about their ministry today. Jesus is the one who keeps the door for us as well.

How faithful are we? What is it that God has called you to do? If you were the only one showing up, would you continue with what God had called you to do? That has been a real question for centuries.

This is a picture of the church of the 17th – 19th century. "It is interesting to note that it is during this time that Jewish missions came into its own, and by 1900 some 250,000 Jews became believers. Jewish missions first began in Germany, took root in England, and finally came to fruition in the United States." (Fruchtenbaum 2003, 64)

Here is the thing, it is God who calls, even today, and He is not looking for those who have exemplary resumes. He is not looking for the individual who believes they have it all together and have become, in their mind, God's gift to the church. He is not looking for those who think they are the cream of the crop, He is looking for those who know they aren't and simply say, "Yes Lord, I am available."

I remember praying that way around 2015. The Lord was already using me, and He was letting me know there was more He wanted to do, but I could not see what that was. So, I simply prayed Lord, I am available for whatever you want to do.

When you pray that way, and mean it, things begin to happen. The Lord is looking for the one who is available, even if they believe they are the least qualified, can't imagine how the Lord would ever use in them due to the circumstances they are in, but are faithful in the little things. Many of you right now are ready for what the Lord has next. You have been faithful in the little things. Why not let Him know you are



available for whatever He has next and then begin to wait on the Lord. He will close doors and open doors for you as you simply remain faithfully following Jesus. It isn't too late for anyone. Moses was called at the age of 80, so was Joshua.

God delights to use men or women who see their weakness, see their inadequacy, and lean on Him for strength and wisdom. It's not that God can't use talented people, because He does. But the Scriptures tell us over and over again how God uses the humble person who depends fully on Him rather than on themselves. (Laurie 2014, Kindle Locations 1594-1597)

The church at Philadelphia, a missionary church in a missionary city, was not a large mega church. They did not have a radio or television ministry. They did not have multiple campuses and a heavy web presence, by the way none of that is bad, in fact we will learn they had opposition to what they were doing, but that did not matter as they were determined to be faithful to what God had called them to be and to do, and we are still talking about them today – a little power has had a 2000-year reach.

We live in the last days of planet earth, we know that from the signs for the second coming of Jesus, not for the rapture.

There are no signs for the rapture since it can take place at any second. But seeing the shadows of the Tribulation does make you wonder, how much longer before we are suddenly changed. The picture here in Revelation of the church in Philadelphia is also a picture of churches in the last days, doing life with the little bit of power they have but remaining faithful to Jesus.

We live in the last days, also a picture of the Philadelphia church, and we live with opposition. As they were in existence at the same time as the Sardis Church, the Laodicean Church and the Church in Thyatira, we find ourselves in the same predicament.

We have an open door, a little power, and we need to make our goal individually and corporately the same as Philadelphia, to keep His word and to not deny His name. My fear is that we, as a body, tend more towards Laodicea than Philadelphia and we will be in this battle until Jesus comes.

We need to remember to pray for our church, and for revival, here, now, in and for this body of believers in South Florida.

Are we also dealing with a "Synagogue of Satan." Yes, we are. We are surrounded by churches today in our culture who are no longer faithful to Jesus.

In other words, Satan not only infiltrated the synagogue during the period John is writing in, but today, he has infiltrated those "churches" that are dead dead dead, lukewarm, or have a view of what is truly unbiblical as being Biblical. They are confused and it reflects in the data George Barna sees at the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University.

"The most overt example of the disconnect between church and worldview is that two-thirds of all American adults (66%) claim to be Christian, but only 6% of them possess the biblical worldview. Of the 170 million adults who self-identified as Christian, 92% are Syncretists." (Barna 2024)

What that means is the majority take bits and pieces of different things and cobble together a world view that they like but isn't necessarily one that is Biblical. This is how totally pagan ideas such as reincarnation or karma wind up being discussed at times in the church. There is also the confusion we see today regarding sexuality, a confusion that does not exist for anyone who holds a Biblical worldview. But one who is into syncretic thinking is willing to negotiate internally and change views on things which are non-negotiables Biblically.



“The Christian body is comprised of adults associated with different religious sects. For instance, among the two-thirds of adults who consider themselves to be Christian, about half (54%) attend some type of Protestant church (e.g., Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopal, etc.).

Syncretism seems to be rampant throughout the Christian church. For example, fewer than one out of 10 who attend a Protestant church has a biblical worldview (9%) , while 88% qualify as Syncretists. One-quarter of all self-professed Christians (25%) are associated with the Catholic church. Among Catholics, 1% have a biblical worldview and 98% are Syncretists. One out of six self-labeled Christians (16%) do not identify with either Protestant or Catholic churches. Of those adults, 4% have a biblical worldview and 96% are Syncretists.” (Barna 2024)

In other words, confusion and the result of that confusion is persecution or pressure on those churches who are remaining faithful. I have gotten used to the sideways glance and the rolling eyes when I say we are a Calvary Chapel. Paul provided the warning.

2 Timothy 3:1–5

“Remember that there will be difficult times in the last days. People will be selfish, greedy, boastful, and conceited; they will be insulting, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, and irreligious; they will be unkind, merciless, slanderers, violent, and fierce; they will hate the good; they will be treacherous, reckless, and swollen with pride; they will love pleasure rather than God; they will hold to the outward form of our religion, but reject its real power. Keep away from such people.” (GNB)

Difficult – χαλεποί – kalepo - being troublesome, hard, difficult; hard times, times of stress; hard to deal with, violent, dangerous. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 1075-1076)

Today, those who remain faithful are accused of being ignorant, out of step with the times, anti-intellectual, homophobic, unloving, racist and misogynists. And now it is also being inferred that we are dangerous to the state. Difficult indeed.

In the last days, the days which Jesus is writing about, and that John is faithfully transcribing, these days will be not just difficult, they will be fierce, violent and dangerous. The Philadelphia church will be around in those days.

As used in Matthew, it described the actions of men possessed by demons. They were out of their minds, uncontrollable, and violent. And here, in Paul’s word of prophecy to Timothy, we find exactly the same meaning! (Stearman 2014, Kindle Locations 1772-1773)

Tom Horn pointed out what he was seeing beginning to take place between the faithful church and the church in 2014 and he sounded a warning which still holds today. The problem is “the developing emergence on the world scene of what will become one of the greatest threats ever raised against the authentic body of Christ— Religious Christians.” (Horn 2014, Kindle Locations 161-163)

Instead of being Christ’s missionaries to the lost world, mainline liberals are now ostensibly the world’s missionaries to the church. They devote their energy to social issues like trying to legitimize same-sex marriage; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) equality; feminism; and being inclusive of non-Christian religions. (Putnam 2014, Kindle Location 2950)

Jesus sees this and He provides the following encouragement for us.



Revelation 3:10–11

“Because you have kept My word of perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of the testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who live on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.” (NASB 2020)

This is Jesus telling the church, not just the Philadelphia church, but us as well, that He will keep us from the Tribulation.

Because the church at Philadelphia had been patient and persevered, they are given a promise, simply because they did and are doing business as usual and being faithful.

We are to do business until He returns for us, we need to be faithful and fully committed to the Great Commission of making disciples expecting Him to come for us at any second yet remaining obedient to His calling on us.

This is what the church in Philadelphia was doing, making disciples, taking advantage of the door opened by Jesus and reaching anyone who would listen.

Christ's word of encouragement to them and to us, we will not go through the Tribulation. We will be removed ahead of time.

Because of their faithfulness the Christians in Philadelphia are promised that they will be kept from the hour of trial which will come upon the earth as a divine judgment. It should be noted that this deliverance is not only from trial but from a period of time in which the trial exists, “the hour of temptation.” If the expression had been simply deliverance from trial, conceivably it could have meant only partial deliverance. The expression seems to have been made as strong as possible that the Philadelphian church would be delivered from this period. (Walvoord 2008, 86-87)

This is our blessed hope. This is what we are waiting and watching for. And here, Jesus tells us not only will He come in fulfillment of His promise in John 14, but He will do so before the Tribulation begins.

Titus 2:11–14

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” (ESV)

However, the promise of Revelation 3:10 not only guarantees being kept from the trials of the Tribulation period but being kept from the time period of the Tribulation. The promise is not, I will keep you from the trials. It is, I will keep you from the hour of the trials...But how clear and plain the promise is. “I ... will keep you from the hour of testing.” Not from just any persecution, but the coming time that will affect the whole earth. (The only way to escape worldwide trouble is not to be on the earth.) And not from just the events, but from the time. And the only way to escape the time when events take place is not to be in a place where time ticks on. The only place that meets those qualifications is heaven. (Ryrie 1981, 116-117)

In verse 11, we see how quickly this is going to happen. Jesus tells us about the timing of the event, this event is imminent, it will come suddenly and without announcement. “I am coming quickly.”

The risen Lord now reminds them (3:11) that he is “coming soon.” The last days have begun, and the return of Christ is imminent (see 1:1, 3). This is the fourth time his “coming” is stressed in the letters—see



2:5, 16; 3:3—but the others are warnings, while this is promise of vindication and reward. (Osborne 2016, 79)

So, to answer the first question, when? We are waiting for the pretribulational rapture of the church. That is when Jesus Christ breaks into time and space resurrecting the entire church while at the same time changing all living believers here on the planet and then evacuating us before the Tribulation begins. Millions, possibly billions, gone in a split second.

This will be the largest shock ever seen on the planet and will impact every single area of the culture. So, what about those left behind. Paul draws attention to the answer to that question in 2 Thessalonians.

When Paul writes to the church in Thessalonica a second time, he takes the view he has already taught, that the rapture is indeed before the Tribulation. But the folks in Thessalonica were being preyed on by opportunistic teachers.

2 Thessalonians 2:1–12

“Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 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. No one is to deceive you in any way! For it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 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. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that he will be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is removed. Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will eliminate with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” (NASB 2020)

Why this does not show up earlier in 1 Thessalonians is simple. After the report of Timothy to Paul and Silas, parties unknown came into Thessalonica seeing the persecution the church as under and began to tailor false teaching to take advantage of the existing circumstances.

Since this is taking place in the here and now with newspaper prophecy and related teachings being rampant, the problem in Thessalonica is that unknown parties entered town and seeing the persecution the church was under, took advantage of the circumstances and situations presented. They crafted and tailored teachings using just enough of the Bible as a base, to take advantage of the current situation, obtain followers, and make a buck. All done at the expense of the well-being of the church and letting them think the Day of the Lord had begun and they were left behind.

The net impact was that “a false report of some sort, purportedly from or through Paul, had led the Thessalonians to believe that the endtime sequence had begun, and that they were already in the Day of the Lord ...the false report was plausible enough to the Thessalonians to raise their concerns that it might be true, though they obviously saw some dissonance between their expectations, their experience, and the report. Whatever endtime sequence Paul had taught them, nothing in their immediate circumstances was sufficient to render the false report completely implausible.” (Dean 2011, 196-197)

What took place is that someone came to Thessalonica and lied to them yet claimed they had authority to teach the word. They did not, they were liars.



To deal with this, Paul takes the church back to the rapture and his teachings on that topic. Jesus will indeed come and gather the church to Himself. He tells them not to be deceived, meaning, they had been lied to by someone who had shown up and taught that the persecution they were undergoing was due to them now being in the Day of the Lord.

Being gathered to Him is one thing and Paul makes passing reference to the rapture in verse one, “but it seems very natural (and highly probable) that Paul’s use of the phrase “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” refers to the second coming.” (Hart 2015, 177)

Someone had come and very convincingly lied. Paul wants them to fully understand all that takes place as they are not to be misled by anyone. When we take our eyes off of scripture, and listen to some of the folks teaching today, they can sound very convincing.

We are about to see an event that happens on this planet every so often, a total eclipse of the sun, this time thought the path of totality will go right through the United States. I cannot begin to tell you how many are currently showing up on You Tube and Face Book tying this into the rapture of the church and the coming of the beast.

Paul is very pointed when he tells them to not be deceived. He is telling us the same thing. The four blood moons in one year were interesting, but not prophetic. But it managed to sell a few thousand books before it was all said and done.

Paul makes it clear that that day would be marked by such outstanding happenings that there would be no danger of mistaking or disregarding its presence. Specifically he says that it will be preceded by a great rebellion of the forces of evil against God and by the appearance of a being traditionally called “the man of sin.” (Morris 1991, 218)

What will it look like if you have been left behind? Paul is clear, do not be deceived. This is a subject of deception even today.

2 Thessalonians 2:3–4

“No one is to deceive you in any way! For it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 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.” (NASB 2020)

The lay of the land is simple, Jesus has already removed His church.

About apostasy - ἀποστασία (apostasia). “To depart. Departure, apostasy.” (Zodhiates 2000)

The first event which must take place before the Day of the Lord is “the apostasy.” That the apostasy comes before the Day of the Lord is made clear by the direct statement of the verse 3: “it will not come unless the apostasy comes first.” However, as the italics in the NASB indicate, the words “it will not come” have been added...Paul is understood to mean that the Day of the Lord is not present unless first both the apostasy comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed. (Combs 1998, 72-73)

Many of us have been taught, and this is a good view, that apostasy here means a falling away from the faith. If the church is now gone and with the Lord, that would indeed be the case, even with a growing number of Tribulation believers coming to Christ, the numbers at the beginning will still be nothing like the numbers who just left in the rapture. So, that is one way to look at this. But there is also another way to look at this, especially when we realize the context being discussed here is all about the Day of the Lord.



That does not mean that apostasy will not happen before the rapture.

We are told by Peter and Jude that apostasy in the church is to be expected as we come closer to the second coming of Jesus, prior to the rapture of the church. Will there be great revival before Jesus comes for the church?

The Bible seems to indicate the opposite but when you study the Kings of Judah, you do see that with the last good King, Josiah, there was a short revival before the type of the Day of the Lord took place, the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Babylon. It does not mean fold up your tents and go home; we may also see a Josiah like revival just before the rapture.

Paul is not speaking of any sign (e.g., apostasy) before the Rapture, but only of this sign occurring before Antichrist is revealed in the middle of the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; 2 Thess. 2:3–4). (Geisler 2005, 655)

I have heard this verse used as a proof text for a generalized falling away before Jesus comes for the church, that, again, is not the context here. It is post-rapture. The context leads us to another view, that of taking the word apostasia to have the meaning, departure. Not just departure from the faith, but an actual spatial departure.

There is abundant lexical data to support the translation of apostasia as “the departure” in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. The cognate verb as well has substantial support for the translation “to physically depart.” (Sweigart 2001, 199)

If apostasia here carries that thought, then Paul is beginning his discussion about the mistaken idea of being in the Day of the Lord by telling these believers, not possible, you are still here. The departure must happen first and since you are still here, the Day of the Lord couldn't have possibly begun.

Both views, in my opinion, when you look at the overall context of the what Paul is saying, tend to point to the same thing. If you have been left behind, you know it, all the believers are gone and the church is apostate, totally, or you know it because of the rapture. Either way, you are left behind.

The next thing you will see, if you are left behind, is the revealing of the “man of lawlessness.” This is the antichrist as identified for us in Daniel 9. There we are given some conditions that also see who this person is so if you are left behind, pay attention.

Daniel 9:27

“And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” (ESV)

This is another one of those things attempts have been made to create deception about. With each generation, there have been attempts to identify who the antichrist will be. Simple, there are types all throughout history simply because Satan has no idea when the rapture will take place, so he is about the business of developing candidates.

It wasn't William the Conqueror, Napoleon, the Kaiser, the Czar, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and on and on. Please, do not play the game of trying to guess who it will be. We don't know and will not know until he is revealed as he signs a 7-year treaty with Israel. But before that happens there must be a departure or falling away, in other words, the church is gone. But once he is revealed, it will be clear to all as he goes into the Holy of Holies and demands to be worshiped as God.



Paul moves onto the next point. Point three of if you see this, you have been left behind. He is restrained by the restrainer, who will do so until He is removed.

2 Thessalonians 2:6–10

“And you know what restrains him now, so that he will be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is removed. Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will eliminate with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved.” (NASB 2020)

The restrainer is the Holy Spirit. Here Paul reminds them of this simple fact. Lawlessness is currently being held back. Yes, it is bad right now, but nothing compared to what it will be like when the restrainer is gone. “Although the Thessalonian believers could already witness the presence of this demonic force that anticipated “the man of lawlessness,” his revelation would be detained until the proper time or “his own (heautou) time.”” (Green 2002)

The force that will result in the antichrist being made manifest is working and has been working since before Paul wrote this. This spiritual warfare has been actively engaged for centuries but the Holy Spirit, in all believers, restrains Satan.

When the rapture of the church takes place, then the church age ends. This is the time where believers are promised and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. All believers on the planet have God in the person of the Holy Spirit living in them.

But when the rapture occurs, yes, the believers are removed, but the Holy Spirit is not removed, no, His ministry changes.

He will be on a different mission after the church is removed. Now the Spirit of God is sealing us until the day of redemption when He will present us and deliver us to the Lord Jesus. If He didn't do that, we would never make it. After He does that, I believe He will come back to the earth to resume His former mission down here. But He will not hinder evil—He will let the Devil have his day for a while. (McGee 1997, 414-415)

How do you know you have been left behind:

Lots of missing people.

What is left of the church is nothing like what you know the church to be today. Apostate through and through.

The antichrist is revealed and known for sure at the 3 ½ year point of the Tribulation. This gives us a point in time.

Why is everything bad, because the ministry of the Holy Spirit has changed and now Satan has free run of everything. Because He is operating differently, the Antichrist is fully revealed.

2 Thessalonians 2:8–12

“Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will eliminate with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason



God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” (NASB 2020)

Here this person is clearly identified for us. This is the one who will be destroyed by Jesus Christ when He returns to the planet.

“The special coming of Christ which was before the mind of both Paul and his readers was this last one, and no other. No anterior, subordinate coming was thought of. The very point of discussion was the time of Christ’s final coming and its immediate antecedents. Of this, therefore, the Thessalonians must have understood Paul to speak; of this, therefore, he did speak. Hence there can be no question that this “man of sin” is located in time immediately before Christ’s second coming, to continue down to that great event, and to meet his destruction in the overwhelming terrors which shall befall the wicked, and especially himself, on that day. One somewhat important point respecting “the man of sin” is therefore settled. We know his date—his place in time relatively to Christ’s final coming.” (Cowles 1872, 626)

John gives us a view of that event at the end of the Tribulation in Revelation 19.

Revelation 19:19–20

“And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.” (ESV)

We also learn something about this person who will be known as the Beast or the Antichrist. He will exhibit and do “miracles” and “wonders.”

Those who follow him will do so because of the signs and power that he will exhibit. People will believe they have a god on the throne of the world, they will be deceived.

Have you ever noticed that there are those who, for whatever reason, simply do not enjoy entertaining truth. They believe lies and follow those who trade in lies. I am simply amazed at some of the elected politicians we see in congress or the senate. We listen and wonder, how could anyone ever even think what they are spouting and saying is the truth. But we are seeing today, those who are not interested at all in the truth.

It is all about the acquisition and retention of power at all costs. There is nothing at all that the person wants except to be in power. We have current examples of political figures in this country who have slept their way to the top. These are the ones who, unless they repent, will follow the Beast and be deceived by his power and wonders.

They do not love the truth and they have no interest in being saved. Power has become their god, and they live here, on this planet.

So what is the plight of those who are lost, what is it today and what will it be in the future of the Day of the Lord. “Not only will those who are perishing not permit God to be God, but they will also not believe the truth. Because they will believe lies, God sends them a lie.” (Gaventa 1998, 115)

What we see is that those who are left behind, will be okay with lies so God gives them what they want, a lie. As we stoop and consider that, we also need to consider the condition of the one left behind.



So, you aren't a believer, and you fall into the category of one who does not love the truth so as to be saved. But you say to yourself, I can always get saved after the rapture. Maybe, maybe not. You see, God Himself will send a deluding influence on all those who are left behind. Yes, it is still possible to come to the Lord during the Tribulation, and many will do so, but the language here in verses 11 and 12 do make us stop, pause and pray for those who still are not saved. A lie is coming.

Let's read this again and remember, it applies to those left behind.

2 Thessalonians 2:10–12

“and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” (NASB 2020)

These are those who did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved, but instead are those who rejected that. They all prefer lies, so God give them a doozy and they fall for it.

They choose to believe the lie and God sends them the delusion that is inherent in their choice. This powerful judgment from God is justified by the unbelievers' decision to refuse the truth. “The lie” is the claim that the man of lawlessness is God. (Constable 1985, 720)

Let me ask another question about this passage, is it also saying that those who refused to believe pre-rapture have passed a point of no return once the rapture does occur?

Is this passage saying that those who do not believe the gospel before the man of sin is revealed—and who are therefore not caught up to meet the Lord at the Rapture but still live on the earth—cannot be saved after the man of lawlessness has been revealed? Or can people who recognize but knowingly reject the truth of the gospel before the Rapture be saved after the Rapture takes place? The “powerful delusion” (v. 11) that God will bring on these individuals in particular suggests that few if any then living on the earth will be saved after the Rapture. This seems to be a special judgment from God that will occur at this one time in history. The many saints which the Book of Revelation indicates will be living on the earth during the Tribulation may thus be people who did not hear and reject the gospel before the Rapture (cf. Rev. 7:4). (Constable 1985, 720-721)

It does seem to say here that those who heard about the truth, pre-rapture, and rejected it, once the rapture occurs, they are done and go whole hog for the lies they are told. It means, don't be left behind to find out.

No, the church in Thessalonica did not miss the rapture. No apostasy, no falling away or departure. The Holy Spirit is still here and if you give your life to Jesus He still comes in immediately to dwell forever. But once the rapture occurs, so does His ministry and things begin to pop.

The Antichrist must be revealed. Not possible until the Holy Spirit is removed and changes His ministry.

These things had not happened yet, so no, the Day of the Lord had not begun yet, and that's a good thing for them and for us as well.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your savior and Lord, right now is the time to make that decision. You have heard the truth and being left behind is not a real option as we have heard. Why not stop running right now?



Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

ABC’s of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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