

Don't Be Fooled Into Foolishness By False "Truths"

Sunday, August 18, 2024 ▪ Ryan Wildauer

Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians:

Don't _____, the Day of the Lord has not yet come. (1-4)

Hold fast to the truth you have _____ from us. (2-3a, 15)

From 2 Thessalonians 2, we're reminded that in the end...

...there will be a Great Rebellion from the _____ of God. (3, 9-12)

...the Man of Lawlessness is _____. (3-9)

...Jesus will _____ after this Man of Lawlessness. (8)

...God will condemn those who _____ to love the truth. (9-12)

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

¹ Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶ And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. 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. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the

activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: When you think about the future, what are some possible scenarios that you're concerned about?

Read & Discuss: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1. Earlier, in 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul responded to concerns the Thessalonian believers had that their deceased loved ones would miss out on the return of Jesus. It appears that now some were saying the day of the Lord had already come. How might this new rumor have affected these believers?
2. What proof does Paul give here that the Day of the Lord has not already come (vv. 3, 9)? Paul seems to expect that these believers would arrive at this conclusion on the basis of what he has already taught them. How have you used what you have been taught to keep your understanding on track?
3. Paul started with a call to "not be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed" by false teachings regarding the end times (v. 2). Since we don't have Paul around to clarify if a prophecy, teaching, or letter is true or not, how should we attempt to assess Christian teaching we encounter? How should we seek resolution when Christians differ on their assessment of what is true and what's not?
4. What do you learn about the Rebellion from this passage? **Read Mark 13:5-13.** How do these words of Jesus add to your understanding of what will happen? Should we be preparing ourselves for such a day? Why or why not? If we are to prepare for such a day, how should we prepare?
5. In verses 3-10, what can we learn about the "man of lawlessness"? **Read Revelation 13:1-10.** What similarities exist between the Man of Lawlessness and the First Beast described in Revelation? How does Revelation 13 add to our understanding of what is coming? Based on the context of Thessalonians, what are the essential things God wants us to know about the Man of Lawlessness?
6. In verse 8 Christ returns and kills the Man of Lawlessness. How should this truth affect our endurance in the midst of persecution and deception? What do you think Paul means when he says Jesus will kill this man "with the breath of his mouth"? How are you encouraged by knowing that the Man of Lawlessness will be brought "to nothing" by Christ's coming (v. 8)?
7. Why would God cause people to believe the lies of the lawless one (v. 11)? How should we understand this given what we know about God from the rest of Scripture? (*Consider Romans 1:18-25.*) How should this coming judgment shape how we respond to Jesus and His teachings?

Pray: Pray God will give us greater understanding of the truth and increase our discernment regarding deception. Pray for God's mercy in the coming days. Ask for fruit in our proclamation of the Gospel.