

Paul's Letters to the **Thessalonians**



Lesson 10-Following the “Man of Sin” or the “Man of Calvary” *Focus: 2 Thess. 2:13-17*

➤ Giving Thanks and Exhortations (v.13-17)

- (v.13-14) **A note of thanks and the calling of the brethren:** Paul had a very thankful heart for the Thessalonians who had received the call of the Lord in their lives—a call to obedience and holiness; a call to salvation! Many are called but few have chosen to receive that call into their lives (Rev. 22:17; 3:20). And few are chosen by God as savable, simply because of the fact that few have chosen to be committed to the Lord (1 Peter 3:20; 4:17,18; Matthew 7:13,14). God’s choice is that we would be saved (See 2 Peter 3:9). God had chosen these brothers and sisters in Thessalonica as ones who would be faithful. God had blessed them with the gospel message and they had received it by their own choice. God had called them, as He calls us “...to believe the truth” and to be sanctified or “made holy” by the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives! We should believe the Lord, obey His truth, and surrender to His Spirit so that our lives will be made holy by His Spirit working within us.
- (v.15-17) The appeal was then made that these brothers and sisters in the faith would remain faithful in their calling and faith. Paul appealed that they would faithfully obey the truths that they were taught by the Apostle’s word both in person and by letter! This we must do as well. Let us be faithful to follow the word of God! Paul closed these thoughts by recording a wish and prayer for the believers that our God—the God of all grace and truth—our Savior—would comfort their hearts and establish them strongly in the faith, helping them to live according to His good works and to glorify His name!

➤ Re-iterating the Bible’s warning against Anti-Christ (reviewing ideas of v.8-12, etc.)

- It’s important for us to warn one more time about the dangers of the anti-Christian power mentioned here. His work is after the work of Satan. It is very deceptive and ultimately unrighteous! It is very deceptive, and Satan will use false miracles to get people to follow and obey this power. He even puts on the cloak of righteousness, but underneath is corruption, sin, and unrighteousness. ***Those who do not love the truth enough to accept and obey it will be committing the unpardonable sin. They will be rejecting the light of truth that God has given them by the Holy Spirit, and therefore they will be left to themselves to believe and accept the lies of Satan, rather than God’s truth. Therefore, we must obey God, not man, and we should do God’s will, obeying His word, with all humble submission to God! Those who love their sinful ways and the corruption of this “man of sin” more than the truth of the “man of Calvary Himself” will be “damned,” condemned, or lost for eternity! (v.8-12). They will face the Judgment of God! That is why we must be very careful not to follow this corrupt and earthly power. The Jewish leaders in the days of Jesus Christ committed this very same sin against the Holy Spirit by rejecting Christ and His truth, simply because they were too proud and did not wish to change their ways to meet the mind of God. (See Matthew 23:27-30; 12:28,30-34; Acts 13:45,46). We must be careful not to commit the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is knowing and hearing the***

truth, but then rejecting it and silencing our conscious as to what is truly the light from God. Such a course will only leave us in the darkness of sin and woe! **If we continue in a path of sin, knowing that our way is wrong, then we are putting ourselves on dangerous ground!**

- **Revelation 13:8 reminds us that all who worship this corrupt little power, instead of God, will not have their names in the book of life—they will be lost forever!**
- **The spirit of anti-Christ** is to follow the path of willful and knowledgeable disobedience to the voice of God. When we knowingly put the commands of men over and above the commands of God, or we put our own will and desires above those of God, then we are following the spirit of anti-Christ. All who have sinned have done that, BUT those who continue in that path will die eternally for lack of repentance and surrender to God. "...To him who knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Satan and his angels went that way. Cain went that way (Gen. 4:1-10), the Pharisees went that way, and many others. **Let us not be one of them—one who puts the ways of men, and of self, and of devils, above the way of God!!** Follow God's word only, not self or sin! (Study these texts for further research: Mark 7:7-13; Hebrews 10:26,27; Matthew 4:4; Psalm 119:9).
- **Discovering the identifying marks of the anti-Christ power**
 - **(1) He is proud, and he takes worship to himself. This takes place within the spiritual temple of God, or namely, the church. (2) He must claim to have the power or place of God Himself.** (He exerts both a religious and political power) "...exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 7:8,20,25, "a mouth speaking great things," 8:11; Rev. 13:5,6). Notice also that Paul points out a "falling away" (2 Thess. 2:3) that was going to happen within the church which would allow this corruption to rise up in the church, and the "man of sin" to be revealed.
 - **This power is "deceptive."** Therefore it tries to look holy, and **claims to have the blessing and the miracle working power of God** (2 Thess. 2:9,10; Near the very end, he gets miraculous help from another "beast" or Kingdom power—Rev.13:11-14).
 - **He also persecutes the faithful followers of God**—especially for 1260 prophetic days or literal years during the middle ages (Dan. 7:21,25; Rev. 13:4,5,7; Num14:34; Ezek. 4:6).
 - **He's called the "wicked" or "Lawless One" because he disregards the holy Law of God** (2 Thess. 2:9,10; Daniel 7:25, "...He thinks to change the set times and laws"; 8:12)
 - **He influences and wields power around the whole world over all peoples and languages—a world-wide influence (Rev. 13:7, 8).**
 - **He was going to rise up out of Rome, the fourth Empire of Daniel 7—as the old Pagan Rome was declining, this Little power would rise up among the divided nations of western Europe and show power over them** (Dan. 7:8,20,23,24; Rev. 13:1-3). In 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8 Paul reveals that this power would be rising up future from the time he was writing (Rome, A.D. 51), and yet before the 2nd Coming, in which God would destroy this corrupt power. These verses indicate that the current power who was existing "now," as Paul wrote, was withholding and needed to be taken out of the way before this corrupt apostate power would rise up. As Pagan Rome was on the decline, this one was rising up!

Question (s) for the Heart:

Is it your choice to lovingly follow the Man of Calvary rather than the "man of sin"? _____