

II THESSALONIANS 2:1-2
DO NOT BE SHAKEN!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to II Thessalonians chapter 2 as we continue our study through Paul's second letter to the church in Thessalonica.

In our first few studies of this letter we saw how Paul was trying to encourage this young church as they were suffering for their faith. And we saw how our faith grows through those difficult times. We draw close to the Lord during times of stress, persecution, difficulty!

And what a witness our lives can be as we stand strong in the faith in the midst of persecution! Let me show you what I mean.

Several years after I came to saving faith I got diabetes and was immediately placed on insulin. I can't say that I was happy. In fact, of the many things that you can get in life, this was not one of them that was on my list of wanting!

But the Lord showed me that His strength was sufficient for me as long as I was resting in Him. He would give me all that I needed to accomplish what He desired in my life.

Now, keep in mind that my family, my dad and mom and brothers were not and are not believers. And one day, after I got the diagnosis of diabetes, my mom said to Julie, my wife, "I bet this has really shaken his faith!"

It was a put down for trusting in a God who allowed this to happen to me and she thought that because of this, I would walk away from the faith. Not a nice thing but that is the mentality many times of unbelievers.

Their thinking goes something like this. God is only good when things are going well and if they don't go the way you planned, you walk away from this God you said you loved and served! That is not saving faith, not at all!

Well, my wife was not going to let that pass by. She told my mom, "No, it has not shaken his faith but it has strengthened his faith!" And it truly did and continues to do!

You see, I could no longer rest in my own strength, which I was doing, but now I was going to have to rest in the Lord and trust that what He promised me He was more than able to bring to pass. And He did!

He brought me here to Manitowoc to oversee this church. He has given me the ability to do more than I could ever imagine. And all He asks me to do is to trust in Him!

And even when people come against us, say things that will challenge our faith, stand strong in the Lord and the power of His might and He will see you through no matter how difficult things may be!

God's plans and God's purposes will come to pass. Now, let me also say this. As we look at various situations that we are in, we may not see it as God does. That is where we have to rest in Him and trust in Him. Remember what Paul said in Philippians 4:13, "**I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.**" May we apply that truth to our lives and walk by faith so that as we walk we are a light to those who are in darkness!

As we move into II Thessalonians chapter 2 this morning we will see Paul now give to them this ***ENLIGHTENMENT ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD!***

And as we will see there was some confusion about this period of time, and we will be looking at some of the reasons why these believers were confused, why they were shaken by what they were hearing and seeing.

Now let me say this. People love to make predictions about the future and some Christians jump on this bandwagon and not only make these predictions, but there are so many who follow these predictions, that in the end, are empty. Let me show you what I mean about some predictions that were made and if they came to pass or not.

We are told,

“Telltale signs are everywhere - from the unexpected persistence and thickness of pack ice in the waters around Iceland to the southward migration of a warmth-loving creature like the armadillo from the Midwest. Since the 1940s the mean global temperature has dropped about 2.7° F.” - Climatologist George J. Kukla of Columbia University in *Time Magazine's* June 24th, 1975 article *Another Ice Age?* [And since that did not prove to be true we have global warming, or more specifically, because they know this is not true, climate change!]

“Stomach ulcers are caused by stress” - accepted medical diagnosis, until Dr. Marshall proved that *H. pylori* caused gastric inflammation by deliberately infecting himself with the bacterium. [My grandfather had an ulcer some 45 years ago and they placed him on buttermilk to help the ulcer. He died of a massive heart attack!]

“Space travel is bunk.” - Sir Harold Spencer Jones, Astronomer Royal of the UK, 1957 (two weeks later Sputnik orbited the Earth).

“There is not the slightest indication that nuclear energy will ever be obtainable. It would mean that the atom would have to be shattered at will.” - Albert Einstein, 1932

“Radio has no future. Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible. X-rays will prove to be a hoax.” - William Thomson, Lord Kelvin, British scientist, 1899.

“I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.” — Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943 [Missed it by . . . that much!]

“That virus is a pussycat.” - Dr. Peter Duesberg, molecular-biology professor at U.C. Berkeley, on HIV, 1988

“The bomb will never go off. I speak as an expert in explosives.” — Admiral William Leahy, U.S. Atomic Bomb Project [Even those who call themselves experts can be wrong and they have been wrong!]

“The earth’s crust does not move”- 19th through early 20th century accepted geological science. See Plate Tectonics

Now we laugh at these things because they are so wrong and yet, for some Christians, they hear wild predictions about the Lord's return and they buy it up! How many predictions have been made for the Rapture of the church or the Tribulation Period?

There have been over 160 predictions regarding the Rapture and the Second Coming! And I am sure that this number is far higher. In our day we see predictions come fast and furious! And in the end, another prediction comes and goes.

Why is that? Does that mean that there is no Rapture? Does that mean that the Lord is not coming back to establish His Kingdom on this earth?

Not at all! You see, these predictions are not in line with what the Bible is saying and thus, when they don't come to pass it does not mean that the Bible is wrong, they are wrong!

This morning, in a message I have called, "***DO NOT BE SHAKEN!***" we will be looking at how we as Christians can stand strong in the midst of all that is going on around us, the false prophecies that are supposedly spoken by God through false prophets, the false teachers who are supposedly teaching for God and the false letters or books that are supposedly from God!

Remember what Paul said to the Ephesian believers in Ephesians chapter 4, "**that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ - from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.**" Ephesians 4:14-16.

Winds of false doctrine blew through the early church and it continues to blow through the church today. And my desire, as we go through these verses, is that you would see how to stand strong against these false teachings and not be blown away!

With that as our background, let's begin reading in II Thessalonians chapter 2, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we look at this topic, ***“DO NOT BE SHAKEN!”*** as Paul is going to give to us this ***ENLIGHTENMENT ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD!***

II THESSALONIANS 2

VERSES 1-2

Now as you read verse 1 here it is important to understand what Paul is talking about, who he is talking to.

He is not speaking of the Day of the Lord and we will deal more with that in a few minutes.

Paul is speaking of the Rapture of the church or being caught up to meet the Lord in the air as He comes for His Bride, the Church! He is speaking to believers!

How do I know that? Listen again to what Paul is saying here. **“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him . . .”**

II Thessalonians 2:1.

First of all, who is coming? Paul tells us that it is the Lord Jesus Christ. And what is going to happen in this coming? We are going to be gathered with Him. Paul made this very clear when he said in I Thessalonians 4:17, **“Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”**

That means that the Rapture of the Church has to take place prior to the start of the Tribulation Period. Why do I say that?

There are many reasons and we have covered this very carefully in our previous studies in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, but remember what Paul told them in chapter 5 of I Thessalonians, **“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.”** I Thessalonians 5:9-11.

You see, if they were not taught that the Rapture came before the Day of the Lord began, then they would be excited to be in the Tribulation Period. I know, that sounds crazy but it makes sense if this were true, and it is not!

You see, if they were in the Tribulation Period that would mean within 7 years Jesus would come to set-up His kingdom on the earth.

But Paul had taught them that God would take them out before this judgment came but confusion came as heresy entered the church.

Isn't it interesting how heresy, false doctrine, false teaching can enter a church so quickly! And not only enter a church, but if it is not dealt with, become a teaching within a church!

Apparently, a misunderstanding of Paul's teaching (or an incorrect application of it) had caused the Thessalonians to be **shaken in mind** and **troubled**. Here Paul used a strong wording, speaking of both a sudden jolt (*shaken in mind*) and a continuing state of upset (*troubled*). Their fears centered on the idea that **the day of Christ had [already] come**.

Clarke gives us this insight into what this word "**shaken**" means. He wrote, "The word to be shaken, signifies to be agitated as a ship at sea in a storm, and strongly marks the confusion and distress which the Thessalonians had felt in their false apprehension of this coming of Christ."

That is exactly what false teaching, false doctrine does in a church and in believer's lives. It confuses them. It distresses them. They are tossed to and fro with these false teachings!

Now let me say this. If a teaching that you are embracing or has been brought into the church has caused confusion, it is not from God! God is not the author of confusion Paul tells us this very thing in I Corinthians 14:33, "**For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.**"

Think about that for a minute. Have you ever been involved in a situation where some new teaching, new doctrine was introduced into a church and it brought all kinds of turmoil, agitation, confusion? I am sure you have!

And for these Thessalonians believers, from Paul's first letter to them and his second letter, this confusion was growing and it was bringing distress, agitation, fear, all kinds of problems! And these two letters were written not that far apart, probably within months of each other.

Thus, the idea of being shaken quickly, in a short amount of time, we see that these false teachers and teachings came in and caused all kinds of problems!

Paul, in Galatians 1:6-9, put it like this in regard to how fast this false gospel was brought into the church. He wrote, **“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”**

Notice that Paul did not tell them to let it go, it is not a big deal. He said to those who were bringing in this false teaching, **“let him be accursed.”** You don’t play with fire and you don’t play with false teaching because it will burn you!

And Paul tells these believers here in Thessalonica, not to be shaken in **“mind”** and the idea is to keep your composure, don’t be swayed by these false teachings and teachers! One writer put it like this, he said that Christians are “to keep their heads against error and fanatic notions.” R. C. Lenski.

I like that and that is exactly what we are to do. Don’t burry your head in the sand, ignoring false teachers and teaching, but rise above it. And the only way to rise above it is to bring it into the light of God’s Word and the Word of God will bring it down if it is false!

And, even when you take God’s Word and try to show false teachers their error, many times they will ignore it or come up with some excuse why they are right, but in the light of God’s Word, it is clearly wrong.

You don't give in or as Paul said in Galatians 1:10, after rebuking the false gospel that was being brought into the church, the Law being added to grace, "**For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.**"

In other words, I fear God too much to allow false doctrine to come into my life. I love God too much to allow this in my life. Do you let the fear of man drive your actions or the fear of God to guide your actions, what you believe?

That means even friendships are not more important than God's Word and that is hard but if you give into this false teaching or that false teaching where do you draw the line? Where is too much too much?

Everything must be brought into the light of God's Word because you are not here to please men but you are bondservant of Jesus Christ and you must obey Him!

Jude put it like this, "**Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**" Jude 3.

Make no mistake about this. God has entrusted to us "**the faith**" and this faith is for all the saints of God. It is not for them back then and there is a new faith today. And thus, we must earnestly contend for this faith that has been entrusted to us because there is a war going on out there to take it away, to change it, to make it into something new!

Now, for these Thessalonians who are being confused, agitated, fearful, and-so-on, what caused this? We don't have to guess because Paul tells us there were three things that were trying to confuse them about this Day of the Lord, and, like I have said, we will talk about this more as we move on, what this day or period of time is all about.

First of all, Paul tells us that they were shaken as false prophecies were given that they were in the day of the Lord, “**by spirit.**”

Not only that, but we also see false teaching that was spoken, telling them that they were in the Day of the Lord, “**by word**”, and it shook them.

Also, they were shaken as this forged letter, supposedly from Paul, was being circulated stating they were in the Day of the Lord, “**by letter.**”

And in this chapter, we will see over the next few weeks, how Paul cleared up those misconceptions, those false prophecies, false teachings, and false letter that were being circulated through the church.

Now I think one of the reasons that they let these prophecies, these teachings, this letter confuse them was because of the persecution that they were facing. They thought they were in the Tribulation Period. They thought that they missed the Rapture and now it was too late! All because of what they heard from these false teachers, false prophets, false letters, it caused them to move away from what they knew to be true and accept that which is contrary to what Paul had taught them and what he wrote to them in his first letter!

You see, this phrase, “**the day of Christ had come**” is better translated, “**the day of the Lord had already come**” as the NIV translates it.

As one writer put it, “The fact that the young Christians in Thessalonica had become so panicked to think that they were now in the Day of the Lord is evidence that Paul had taught them that the Rapture of the Church would precede the Day of the Lord judgments so that Christians would never see the Day of the Lord - if he had taught them the post-trib. position they would have been happy they were in the Day of the Lord because Jesus would be coming soon.” (Pastor Phil Ballmaier)

I agree. I do see that they had a hard time distinguishing their present troubles from the Day of the Lord, and when this false doctrine, false teaching, false prophecies came into the church, they bought it hook, line and sinker!

And here's the thing. In II Thessalonians 2:5 Paul wrote, "**Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things.**" In fact, he was continually teaching them these things and yet, they ignored what Paul said and listened to the false prophets, the false teachers, the false doctrine. How easily we are swayed!

In I Thessalonians 1:10 Paul wrote them, telling them who they are waiting for. He wrote, "**and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.**"

They are not looking for the Antichrist. They are not looking for the Tribulation Period. They were waiting for the Lord Jesus Christ to come back for His Bride, the Church and deliver us from the wrath to come, the wrath that will be poured out upon a Christ rejecting world!

We see this also spoken of in I Thessalonians 5:1-10, where Paul wrote them and said, **“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.”**

We are not appointed for God’s wrath because Jesus took the wrath that was due us!

Also, in Revelation 3:10, listen to what Jesus says if some of you are concerned about this issue. He said, **“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”**

I think that is very clear. God will take His Bride out before He pours out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world, upon the earth dwellers, the unbelievers. He will not pour His wrath upon us because we are not earth dwellers, our citizenship is in heaven. Yes, we live on this earth but we are strangers and aliens just passing through down here!

Now, here we are, almost 2,000 years down the road from this letter. And yes, these very young Christians just didn't know better. But we are more mature in the faith, we would never be taken in by false teaching, would we?

Of course we would and many have today and they do follow along those lines that Paul spoke of regarding these Thessalonian believers. False prophecies, false teaching and a false letter or book! Let's look at these for a minute.

FALSE PROPHECIES

This first one, false prophecies, speak of the person speaking for the Lord. In other words, "***Thus says the Lord.***" And there are many who talk like this, everything is "***Thus says the Lord.***" Now when you are quoting Scripture or forthtelling the Words of God, there is nothing wrong with that. But they go far beyond the Word of God and make all kinds of wild predictions!

You see, when you foretell or speak of new revelations from God about the future, I am sorry, we have the completed Word of God and we are not to add to it or take away from it.

But, there is a big push today for apostles and prophets to speak forth these new revelations from God. And what ends up happening is that these new revelations, even though they contradict Scripture, are placed ahead of Scripture as the Gospel truth and there is no one being held accountable for what they are saying, what they are teaching.

Listen to this from a ministry that is promoting this prophetic ministry and it should be troubling what he is saying. He wrote,

Prophetic ministry training includes how to avoid demonic familiar spirits. In prophetic ministry, prophets carry a great blessing for the body of Christ. ***They also have a significant responsibility guarding their ministries from demonic encroachment while avoiding familiar spirits.***

As prophets mature in their ministries, they quickly learn to “wait for the unction” of the Holy Spirit before moving out in their gifting. This is how they keep defilement and spiritual corruption out of their lives and ministries. . . .

Prophets make mistakes and some prophetic words are wrong. Scripture says that we “see through a glass darkly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). If prophets and prophecies were always accurate then people would be tempted to follow prophets instead of Jesus. All prophecy needs to be tested for accuracy. Period. This helps close the door to familiar spirits.

- <http://www.jonasclark.com/prophetic-ministry-training-familiar-spirits/?start=1>

First of all, the Scriptures are very clear on this, Satan and his demons can transform themselves into angels of light. (II Corinthians 11:13-15) If that is true, and it is, then how are you going to guard yourself from these deceptions? That is simple. The Word of God will expose the lies that are being spoken!

Secondly, prophets don't have the luxury of making mistakes. If they spoke a false word from God then they were to be stoned to death. There was no room for getting better, you either spoke for God or you didn't! (Deuteronomy 18:20-22)

I have dealt with this many times and it is simple. The ministry of apostles and prophets have passed off the scene. They laid the foundation for the church and now their teaching is what the church is being built upon! (Ephesians 2:20-22)

That is what one web site said, and I agree. They wrote,

The gift of prophet seems to have been a temporary gift given by Christ for the laying of the foundation of the church. Prophets were foundational to the church (Ephesians 3:20). The prophet proclaimed a message from the Lord to the early believers. Sometimes a prophet's message was revelatory (new revelation and truth from God) and sometimes a prophet's message was predictive (see Acts 11:28 and 21:10). The early Christians did not have the complete Bible.

Some early Christians did not have access to any of the books of the New Testament. The New Testament prophets "filled the gap" by proclaiming God's message to the people who would not have access to it otherwise. The last book of the New Testament (Revelation) was not completed until late in the first century. So, the Lord sent prophets to proclaim God's Word to His people.

Are there true prophets today? If the purpose of a prophet was to reveal truth from God, why would we need prophets if we have the completed revelation from God in the Bible? If prophets were the "foundation" of the early church, are we still building the "foundation" today? Can God give someone a message to deliver to someone else? Absolutely! Does God reveal truth to someone in a supernatural way and enable that person to deliver that message to others? Absolutely! But is this the biblical gift of prophecy? No.

Whatever the case, whenever a person claims to be speaking for God (the essence of prophecy) the key is to compare what is said with what the Bible says. If God were to speak through a person today, it would be in 100% complete agreement with what God has already said in the Bible. God does not contradict Himself.

1 John 4:1 instructs us, “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 declares, “Do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good.”

So, whether is it a “word from the Lord” or a supposed prophecy, our response should be the same. Compare what is said to what the Word of God says. If it contradicts the Bible, throw it out. If it agrees with the Bible, pray for wisdom and discernment as to how to apply the message (2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:5).

- <https://www.gotquestions.org/prophets-today.html>

And make no mistake, this growing trend of apostles and prophets is very strange. Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

The prophetic ministry of Bethel Church is about igniting purpose, hope, and identity through the gift of prophecy. We are passionate about teaching, equipping, and activating believers in the gift of prophecy and words of knowledge in the local church at Bethel, at BSSM, and to churches around the world. The heartbeat of prophetic ministry is anchored in 1 Corinthians 14 - “Pursue love and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy” and it is our mission to see men and women rise up in the prophetic.

Receiving Prophetic Ministry at Bethel Church

We invite you, our Bethel Redding family and visitors, to come receive a word from our prophetic ministry teams. Our Prophetic Sessions occur most Sunday afternoons. You must have an appointment to receive prophetic ministry. Follow the steps below to reserve a ticket!

How to Make an Appointment

Step 1: Reserve Ticket

Please Note:

Because of limited space and team, we can only accommodate prophetic appointments for each person once every 6 months.

Married couples, please reserve one ticket per couple and non-married guests, reserve one per person.

- <http://bethelredding.com/content/prophetic-ministry>

Wow, I have to make an appointment for a session with a prophet! Can you imagine John the Baptist making appointments! Very sad and not Scriptural and thus, the things that they are telling you are not from God but from their own wisdom, which is not worth much and it can be dangerous!

And these false prophets have made predictions of the homosexual community being destroyed on a certain date, the Lord returning and all kinds of other bizarre and non-scriptural predictions.

Let me ask you this. If we have the Word of God, something that the church in Thessalonica did not have, but they did have the teaching of Paul and His first letter, why in the world do we, why did they listen to these false prophets?

Because they sound so good. It is so exciting. Please, please, please, stay in the Word of God and don't listen to these false prophets. Why go to these guys instead of just coming to Jesus and His Word and getting the truth 100% of the time. Foolishness to go anywhere else!

FALSE TEACHING

The second point that Paul made in regard to their confusion, their anxiety, their being tossed around was false teaching!

Let me show you what I mean in regard to what is happening in the church today. And keep in mind that this move away from the Word of God has opened the door for false teaching to come flooding into the church. And ultimately, it will lead to a universal one world church with the false prophet leading it. And we are moving quickly in that direction as we negate the doctrine of Scripture for the philosophy of man.

The emerging church is one of the vehicles that the devil is using to bring down Christianity, to destroy our faith. Now that will never happen but many have been swept away by their false teaching. Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

The emergent, or emerging church favors the use of simple story and narrative in preaching style. Adherents often place a high value on good works or social activism. The hallmark of the emergent church is the liberal, new age aspect including the practice of contemplative monastic meditation and prayers. While some do emphasize eternal salvation, many in the emerging church emphasize the here and now (taking care of the earth, etc.) and reject the inerrancy of Scripture.

Regarding doctrine, these folks generally reject systematic Christian theology, the integrity of Scripture, and gospel exclusivity. They don't believe Christianity is the one true religion and many associated with the emergent church promote homosexuality. Some deny the deity of Jesus Christ; they call for diversity, "unity," and camaraderie among all religions, and they modify and expand their teachings. It is quite clearly and simply a war against the Truth.

At an emergent church workshop in San Diego about ten years ago, former national coordinator of the Emergent Village, Tony Jones stated:

"This is about our belief that theology changes. The message of the gospel changes. It's not just the method that changes."

What? I submit to you that Jesus never changed his message to fit the times! Sadly, too many believers are uninterested, uninformed, or just plain apathetic about the Bible and understanding the times we live in where relevance is emphasized more than repentance.

Rob Bell quotes:

"Repentance is not turning from sin. It is a 'celebration' of life in Christ. Anyone who tells you that you need to repent is not talking about Christianity."

"When people use the word *hell*, what do they mean? They mean a place, an event, a situation absent of how God desires things to be. Famine, debt, oppression, loneliness, despair, death, slaughter - they are all hell on earth. Jesus' desire for his followers is that they live in such a way that they bring heaven to earth."

Next, Doug Pagitt is another leader in the emergent church movement. An author and pastor of Solomon's Porch in Minneapolis, Pagitt was asked, "Is homosexuality incompatible with Christian faith?" He replied:

“NO. Being Gay and Christian is not a contradiction in any way.” (But wait, there’s more!)

“The inerrancy (of Scripture) debate is based on the belief that the Bible is the word of God, that the Bible is true because God made it and gave it to us as a guide to truth. But that’s not what the Bible says.”

Finally, Shane Clairborne is an author, co-founder of The Potter Street Community – formerly The Simple Way, a graduate of Eastern University and is a part of The Alternative Seminary in Philadelphia, PA.

Like Tony Campolo, Claiborne is a Red Letter Christian. He is a leading figure in the New Monasticism movement and is featured in the documentary “The Ordinary Radicals.” He is an environmentalist and wrote the foreword to Ben Lowe’s “Green Revolution: Coming Together to Care for Creation.” He once stated that he “gave up Christianity to follow Jesus.”

In the words of Shane Claiborne:

“There are extremists, both Muslim and Christian, who kill in the name of their gods.”

“But if you tell me I have to be born again to enter the Kingdom of God, I can tell you that you have to sell everything you have and give it to the poor, because Jesus said that to one guy, too. But I guess that’s why God invented highlighters, so we can highlight the parts we like and ignore the rest.”

Dr. Walter Martin, founder of the Christian Research Institute, sternly warned about liberal theology and the emergent church saying,

“It is a cult because it follows every outlined structure of cultism; its own revelations; its own gurus, and its denial – systematically - of all sound systematic Christian theology. It is a cult because it passes its leadership on to the next group that takes over - either modifying, expanding or contracting - the same heresies; dressing them up in different language, and passing them on . . . it denies the authority of Scripture, it ruins its own theology. And it ends in immorality; because the only way you could have gotten to this homosexual, morally relativistic, garbage - which is today in our denominational structures - is if the leadership of those denominations denied the authority of the Scriptures and Jesus Christ as Lord . . . Test all things; make sure of what is true (see 1 Thessalonians 5:21). I’m not being harsh; I’m not being judgmental. I am being thoroughly, consistently, Christian; in the light of historic theology, and the holy Bible.”

- <http://davidfiorazo.com/2016/09/the-church-infesting-christianity/>

Make no mistake about it, false teachers have always been around but we should not be taken in by what they have to say. We have the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to give us the discernment we need to know right from wrong. And when you compare what they have to say to God’s Word, they are wrong, very wrong!

Let us not become confused, anxious, fearful, about what they are saying. Let us rest in the Words of God because the truth will set you free from the lies.

FALSE LETTER OR BOOK

Isn’t it amazing at the number of books that have been published that have the audacity to be called Christian books! From yoga to New Age and Eastern Mysticism has a Christian spin on them and that has led many away from the faith!

I am going to just speak about one book, there are so many we can look at but this one is accredited to Jesus and it is called, “Jesus Calling” by Sarah Young.

In the book, “Jesus Calling” it has sold over 10 million copies, we see these false teachings spoken by this so-called Jesus! Let me say this. If this is not Jesus speaking, then this is nothing more than a demon given her these words and thus, the church is listening to demons and not to Jesus!

And please don’t get mad at me if you like this book. There has been some controversy over this book because of its unscriptural content and thus, Sarah Young and Thomas Nelson, the publisher edited it to be more appealing to Christians with its recent publications. And it has been revised several times!

Now let’s think that one through. If you have to change what is in it, or I should say change some of the words that are in it, have you really changed the content? I don’t think so and again, that is how Satan works to deceive us! You make it sound more appealing but it is the same damnable message and it is not from Jesus!

And do you really think Jesus made a mistake with that first phone call? Well, I hate to say this, no, that is not true. Jesus was not calling Sarah Young but this teaching of hers is nothing more than doctrines of demons!

And let me say this. Jesus is calling out to us today and He is speaking to us through the Word of God. Then as we read the Word of God and the Holy Spirit opens the Word of God up to our hearts, we are hearing from Jesus!

Paul put it like this in Hebrews 1:1-4 where he said, **“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”**

We are living in a day when spiritualism, occultism has moved into the church and it is because we don't listen to God's voice, we are looking other places.

And I am sorry if I offended any of you who love that book. Wait, no I am not sorry, because you need to hear this. It is not of God. Just read the Word of God and you will not be lead astray! Jesus has called out to us through His Word!

Listen to this warning by Peter in II Peter 3:17-18 as he is warning us to be wise. He wrote, **“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever.”**

There is the warning, beware, pay attention to what you are taking in because there are those who are going to try and lead you away from the truth.

What can we do? **“... grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. . . .”** That is what we can do and we will grow as we take the Word of God into our lives and apply these things to our lives. In other words, live what we say we believe!

Thus, be wise with what you watch, be wise on the Internet, be wise with your relationships at work, be wise in what you read!

You see, the days are evil and evil is not only promoted in the world, which we can understand, but we see it promoted in the church today! Be careful. Pay attention. Do not be confused or fearful or anxious but know what God's Word has to say and stick to it.

Now, specifically here in II Thessalonians Paul is speaking of the Day of the Lord and these believers in Thessalonica thought they were right in the middle of this day. They had missed the Rapture of the Church!

But, as Paul is going to show them in this chapter, they had not missed anything!

One writer, in regard to what Paul is sharing with these believers, and us, said,

To end the Thessalonians' confusion, Paul needed to refute the lies of the false teachers. And to allay the Thessalonians' fears, he needed to correct their misunderstandings about the Day of the Lord. The apostle accomplished both objectives simply by proving that the Day of the Lord could not have arrived. His unarguable point was that God has fixed in the future an unmistakable event that must take place before the Day of the Lord arrives. That event still has not happened. Paul wove that truth into an exhortation to the Thessalonians to be ready for the end times by not being deceived, forgetful, ignorant, unbelieving, insecure, or weak.

- John MacArthur, II Thessalonians 2

But what is this Day of the Lord? What is it speaking of? There is much confusion on this and I will try to help clear it up.

First of all, in the Old Testament this Day of the Lord is mentioned explicitly some nineteen times and four times in the New Testament.

Now, keep in mind that the Day of the Lord is not a literal day but a period of time.

And thus, the Day of the Lord begins right after the Rapture of the Church through the Tribulation Period, the Kingdom Age and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth that will be eternal.

This period of time known as the Day of the Lord you can read what takes place in Revelation 6:1-19:16. It is known as the Tribulation Period

We also see this Day of the Lord mentioned in Malachi 4:1-6. In these verses, it is speaking of the Second Coming of Christ.

In Zechariah 14:1-8 we see the Day of the Lord speaking of the Tribulation Period leading into the Kingdom Age.

And in II Peter 3:8-10 we see the Day of the Lord speak of the creation of a new heavens and a new earth, the eternal state.

All this is part of that period of time known as the Day of the Lord that the Scriptures speak of. It is not just one day or twenty-four-hour period of time.

Also, and I do find this interesting, the Jewish day was from sunset to sunrise. I see this with the Day of the Lord. Think about it. What happens first, in this period of time, is the Tribulation Period where God pours out His wrath on a Christ rejecting world! You might say it is a time of darkness, extreme darkness!

From there we move to a new day in the history of mankind – the Kingdom Age where Jesus Christ will rule and reign from Jerusalem for 1,000 years. We call it the Millennial reign of Christ.

The Kingdom Age will end with the Great White Throne Judgment where God will send those who have rejected Him throughout history to the Lake of Fire and all those who have come to Him will enter the eternal state where God creates a new heaven and a new earth!

Thus, we have gone from the darkness of the Tribulation Period to the light of the eternal state!

Now, next time we will be dealing with what Paul said in regard to two things that must happen before the Day of the Lord begins. And because of some confusion with what Paul is saying, some have concluded that the pre-tribulation rapture of the church is not correct. The Church will not be caught up to be with the Lord before the Tribulation Period begins.

Again, we will look at that more closely next time, as these two signs that must occur before the Day of the Lord begins? I believe one occurs before and the other is the one that initiates the Day of the Lord, as we will see.

Let me leave you with these words that Paul spoke to this young church to encourage them in all they were going through. He wrote in II Thessalonians 2:15-17, **“Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. 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, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.”**

May we not be tossed to and fro with the winds of doctrine that come blowing through the church. Don't set your sails up so that you are blown away by them. But stand strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Don't let false prophecies, false teachers and false books confuse you, cause you to be anxious, cause doubt and distress in your life. Rest in the Lord, trust in His Word and see the salvation that He will bring to your life!