

II THESSALONIANS 2:5-12
THE LAWLESS ONE!
PART 3

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.

Now we have spent several weeks in this chapter and I believe it is important we understand what Paul is saying here. The reason I say that is because there are many Christians today who are fearful of the days we are living in, they are confused about what is happening in the world and they are shaken and troubled by all that is going on.

Therefore, as Paul corrects the misunderstanding about the end-times with the Thessalonians, I believe that the Holy Spirit is doing the same with us, getting us refocused on the reality of the situation so we are not shaken or troubled by what we see or hear, but encouraged by it!

I know, that sounds strange, encouraged by what we see going on in the world when it is not good. I am not saying we rejoice that the world is getting more and more wicked, immoral, violent, but I take comfort that things are not spinning out of control, but they are going according to what God has said in His Word!

For these believers, they thought they missed the Rapture of the Church and were in the Tribulation Period. And Paul tells them that before the Tribulation Period begins “**the falling away comes first**” or the Rapture. And we went into detail explaining how this is speaking of the Rapture and not a falling away from the faith or apostasy as many believe.

Remember, they thought they missed the Rapture and Paul is telling them that before the Day of the Lord begins, before the Tribulation Period begins, the Rapture of the Church will take place!

Not only that, but then, after the Rapture of the Church, we see the “man of sin” revealed, “the son of perdition” or the Antichrist! And that goes along with what John tells us in Revelation chapter 6 as Jesus unseals the first judgment and the Antichrist is revealed. This is the start of the Day of the Lord!

And this man of sin will exalt himself above God, or at least try to. He will enter the Temple of God in Jerusalem and demand to be worshiped as God!

And right now, the Holy Spirit is restraining the unleashing of this man and of lawlessness. And this is done as the Holy Spirit works through the Church, we are that preserving force. But once the Church is removed, lawlessness will abound or those things that are contrary to God will explode! Which is hard to even imagine that it can get worse, and it will!

And this Antichrist, this man of sin will have lying signs and wonders that he will do to deceive people, but he will be destroyed with the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! You see, the Antichrist is not God, he is a man and he will die like a man and be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity!

And I want to read from II Thessalonians chapter 2, beginning in verse 9 because that will lead us into our study this morning as we look at this *Lawless One* and focus on *The Lie* that he will perpetrate upon the people of this world, the lie that is already out there and spreading quickly!

Paul tells us, **“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”**

You see, they rejected the love of the truth, they rejected the gift of life that is found in Jesus Christ. They rejected salvation and what does that cause them to believe? That is what we will be looking at this morning.

With that as our background, let's begin reading in II Thessalonians chapter 2, beginning in verse 11 and see what the Lord has for us this morning as we study His Word.

II THESSALONIANS 2

VERSES 11-12

Now, as you read this you may be shocked that **“God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie.”** Poole sums it up like this, “They were first deluded, which was their sin; and God sends them strong delusion, and that is their punishment.”

Now, in reading that. In hearing what this is all about. How can God, who is good, who is holy, who there is no darkness in Him at all, do something like this? It does not seem fair, it does not seem right, so how can this be?

To understand what is going on here we need to look back at what Paul has just said. Back in verse 10 of II Thessalonians chapter 2 Paul tells us, **“because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”**

Do you see how this explains what Paul means here in verse 11 of II Thessalonians? You see, because they have not received the love of the truth, they have rejected Jesus as their Lord and Savior and God gave them what they wanted, life without Christ by sending them a strong delusion.

They are abandoned by God because of the choices they made to reject the Gospel!

They are condemned by God because of the choices they made to reject the Gospel!

But God's desire is for all to be saved but He will not force anyone into the Kingdom, it is your choice.

Paul told Timothy of God's great desire to see all saved in I Timothy 2:4-6, as he tells us that God, **“who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”**

A few weeks back I was talking with Karl and we were talking about how dark this world is getting. And I told Karl that as we look at these things that are going on we are outraged and if we could, we would stomp it out.

But, God not only sees what is on the news, what we see, but He sees the heart of man and every person who is on this planet. Can you imagine what He sees! And yet, look at the longsuffering of God before He pours out His judgment.

When you see the judgement of God spoken of in the Scriptures, don't come to the conclusion that God just flew off the handle and smote everyone! No, He is patient, He is longsuffering, and His desire is that all would be saved.

But there comes a point where you reject the truth and God will allow you to believe what you want, and this strong delusion will feed the flesh of man, as we will see!

You see, this judgment of God will be unleashed, and the Lord will allow the Antichrist to spread this lie to the people of this world for not receiving the love of the truth – the Gospel message!

And when I said that the lie that the Antichrist will speak forth and spread will feed the flesh, I was not joking. Look again at II Thessalonians 2:12, where Paul tells us, “**that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**”

They rejected the truth of God, the Gospel message that would save them because they got their pleasure in doing unrighteous things! And that fits in with what we see today. It is all about pleasure and not in the things of God but the things that are opposed to God!

Let me share with you this article that will show you how we can easily be fooled, and I think you will understand why people fall for all kinds of pleasure that is unrighteous and in the end, it brings death and destruction to their lives. We are told,

Yale psychologist Paul Bloom says WHY we enjoy what we enjoy is very complicated.

“It seems like we just taste food, and taste wine, we respond to our visceral sensations. But actually it is surprisingly deep,” Bloom said.

So deep, in fact, that Bloom was pleased to write a book on pleasure, which he says is as much about our brains as about our experiences.

“Our pleasure is a response not just to the physical makeup of something, what it looks like or tastes like, or smells like, or feels like, *but rather to our beliefs of what it really IS, what its real essence is,*” Bloom said.

And boy, can we be fooled!

Bloom recalls one famous experiment with wine drinkers done by scientists at Stanford and Cal Tech . . .

“Half the people are told they’re drinking cheap plunk, the other half are told they’re drinking something out of \$100-\$150 bottle,” Bloom said. “It tastes better to them, if they THINK they’re drinking from an expensive bottle. And it turns out that if they think they’re drinking expensive wine, parts of the brain that are associated with pleasure and reward light up like a Christmas tree.”

“So if I have people over for dinner, I should add a little ‘1’ in front of the price tag, and put it on the table?” Spencer asked.

“That is the ultimate trick to making wine taste better,” Bloom said.

And it’s the sort of trick that works only on human beings.

“Both my dog and me enjoy drinking water when we’re thirsty, but I’m the one who cares about where the water came from - whether it’s bottled water, or from the tap,” Bloom said. “My dog doesn’t care.”

“You’re the one that, if we put a higher price tag on that bottle of water, you’ll enjoy it more?” suggested Spencer.

“That’s right! I might give my dog premium dog food, but the dog doesn’t care that I spent a lot of money for it.”

- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-science-behind-pleasure-seeking-25-09-2011/>

That is kind of funny to me, and true, dogs don’t care what kind of water you give them, but we sure do. And we will pay money for bottled water because it comes from – well – who knows where, but it is natural, and you are willing to pay the price for it.

Several years back I was at a medical conference and one the speakers, a doctor, had to tell this story because he saw so many people at the conference with bottled water.

He said that they did a study and found that the drinking water in Milwaukee was actually better than what some were purchasing in bottles at the store! And there were a lot of groans from the people because they bought into this lie they were told about these bottled waters being better.

And in regard to pleasure, God wants us to enjoy ourselves. But the problem comes in what is right and what is wrong, what you should do and what you shouldn't do!

You see, God has given to us His Word that tells us what is right and what is wrong. God has given us a consciousness that tells us what is right and what is wrong.

But we can, as Paul said in I Timothy 4:2, “**... having their own conscience seared with a hot iron . . .**” In other words, we can allow ourselves to be unfeeling to what God desires and that is a dangerous place to be.

I believe that is what we see here with these people. It was not that they just rejected the love of the truth one time, but many, many times and they had reached the point where they were open to believe the lie!

And what I want you to see here is that it is not “*a*” lie. There are many lies out there that Satan loves to deceive people with. But that is not what Paul is speaking about here.

Paul is speaking of a specific lie and thus, he speaks of “**the lie.**”

We see this spoken of in Romans chapter 1, where Paul tells us, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness . . . because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”** Romans 1:18, 21-25.

And notice what this produces in their lives, the pleasure that they are seeking, and that pleasure is unrighteous. Paul continues on and says, **“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”** Romans 1:26-32.

Once again we see God give them over because they rejected Him and thus, God gave them what they wanted and it is manifested in all kinds of immoral, sinful behavior.

Also, did you see that Paul spoke of “**the lie**” and once again, I believe it is a specific lie, not many different lies.

Now, in saying that, where was the first lie perpetrated upon man? It was in the Garden of Eden and I believe this first lie that Satan brought forth is “**the lie**” that Paul is speaking of and it is a good one and thus, Satan has not needed to change it.

Let’s look at what took place in the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 3:1-5 we are told, “**Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, “You shall not eat of every tree of the garden”?’ And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.”’ Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’**”

This blows me away because what Satan spoke to Eve in the Garden of Eden he is doing the same today, as I have said.

Notice what we see Satan do first. He challenged the Word of God – “**Has God indeed said.**” And we do see that today. From redefining what God’s Word said, to adding to it and taking away from it. There is a challenge to God’s Word just as we see here in the Garden of Eden!

Now, from the challenge to God's Word we see confusion on Eve's part. And that is what false teaching, false doctrine does. It confuses people and out of that confusion we see Eve add to God's Word – **“We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”**

God never said not to touch the fruit but not to eat of it and yet, with the confusion brought about by Satan, she added to God's Word and that is a dangerous thing to do!

Now we see Satan respond and he tells Eve not to worry because there is no judgment for what you do – **“You will not surely die.”**

In other words, do what you want because there is no sin and thus, if there is no sin then there is no judgment for what you do! Sound familiar? It should because it is what is being promoted today in churches!

And this all leads to **“the lie”** that Paul spoke of – **“you will be like God.”** That is the false teaching, the false doctrine, the doctrine of demons that the world, I believe, will embrace. And since we are Gods, at least that is what Satan was saying and many believe, then we will know **“good from evil.”**

In other words, we will decide what is right and what is wrong because we are God and we can do what we want!

And I think that Jesus makes that very point in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew chapter 24. He said in Matthew 24:4, **“... ‘For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.’”**

Make no mistake about it, there have always been false Christ's, those that claim to be Christ and they deceive people. I don't think that is what Jesus is saying here. I don't think that is His point.

I believe there is something that He is hitting on that may blow you away. The Greek word for "**many**" is POLUS and it speaks of a very great number, as in millions and millions of people, not just a select few and they will claim to be god!

Yes, there are those few who claim to be Christ, claim to be God but this is far different than just a few. And as you look at what the New Age is teaching, as you look what other religions are teaching, when you look even at what some in the church are teaching, you will see this common thread of man being God, having the God consciousness in him!

That is a doctrine of demons and it is what was spoken of in the Garden of Eden to Eve by Satan and it is what is permeating our world today, "**you will be like God.**"

I don't know if you remember Shirley MacLaine's book, "Out on a Limb." It was written back in 1983, some 35 years ago and that is the premise of this book, that we are god!

And this book was made into a movie in 1987. In one of the scenes from the movie it shows Shirley MacLaine on a beach and she is shouting, "I am! I am!"

In the book "Dancing in the Light" she tells us, "I know that I exist, therefore ***I AM***. I know that the God source exists. Therefore ***IT IS***. Since I am a part of that force, then ***I AM*** that ***I AM.***"

How can she come to such conclusions? Well, her higher self told her these things. H. S. confirms what she believes. She wrote, “‘Then what is the difference between you and God?’ [Shirley] asked [her higher self]. ‘None,’ it said. ‘I am God, because all energy is plugged into the same source. We are each aspects of that source. We are all part of God, we are all individualized reflections of the God source. God is us and we are God.’ ‘And you are me.’ ‘Precisely.’”

Obviously, Shirley MacLaine is not saved and yet, she believes in this idea that we are God. Why would Satan even care about her since she is not saved? Not only to keep her from the truth but to mislead others with this doctrine of demons!

And if you still doubt that, look at Luke 21:7-8, where we are told of this same teaching from Matthew 24, this Olivet Discourse. We are told, **“So they asked Him, saying, ‘Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?’ And He said: ‘Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them.’”**

In verse 8 the word **“He”** or **“Christ”** is italicized, it shouldn’t be there but was put there by the translators to make it clearer, but it truly doesn’t make it clearer, we tend to miss the point because of it.

It should read, **“Many shall come saying, ‘I AM.’”** Isn’t that interesting because that is what Shirley MacLaine said, it is what the New Age movement is saying, and it is what the church is now also saying, that we are god!

Some of you may remember the bestseller by Richard Back, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Did you know that this was all dictated to him by a disembodied spirit? And what did that disembodied spirit tell him?

One of the quotes from Richard Back in his book goes like this, “No, Jonathan, there is no such place. Heaven is not a place, and it is not a time. Heaven is being perfect.” And, “Each of us is in truth an idea of the Great Gull, an unlimited idea of freedom.”

And as it comes to Christians, many Christians have read books by M. Scott Peck, and I am amazed that they have and still do.

You see, M. Scott Peck, a psychologist, wrote a book, *The Road Less Traveled*, that has been read by, not only many Christians but New Age followers as well. And, yet his words are not of God and that leaves only one other place they came from!

Listen to what he wrote in this book, *The Road Less Traveled* and see if it doesn't sound like what was spoken in the Garden of Eden to Eve by the serpent. He wrote,

“God wants us to become Himself (or Herself or Itself). We are growing toward godhood. God is the goal of evolution.” (*The Road Less Traveled*, p. 270).

How sad that Christians have read this book and yet see nothing wrong with his teachings!

I have seen this book in Christian bookstores, in Christian book Distribution Companies, being promoted by Christians! It is not at all Christian and yet, Christians are reading it and thus, do they believe we are god?

Now, if what M. Scott Peck wrote is true, don't you think we should find that in the Bible somewhere? Of course we should and of course we don't!

In Isaiah 44:8 we are told, **“Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.”**

Also, in Isaiah 45:5-6 we are told, **“I am the Lord, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other.”**

I don't think that is confusing at all. There is One God and it is not us! And yet, why are so many taken in by this doctrine of demons, the lie?

And there is so much more in regard to this issue. Matthew Fox tells us that,

“We need to become aware of the Cosmic Christ, which means recognizing that every being has within it the light of Christ.”

“Everyone is born a mystic and a lover who experiences the unity of things and all are called to keep this mystic or love of life alive.”

Now let's think about that for a minute. If the Christ consciousness is in everyone, does the Bible support this teaching? No, it does not. In fact, Paul tells us Romans 8:9-11, **“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”**

Paul is saying that not everyone has the Spirit of Christ in them. So what Matthew Fox tells us is not true. Only those who have come to Christ have the Spirit of God in them and that does not make them a God, it makes them Christians or Christ-followers, children of God but not God!

M. Basil Pennington wrote, “When we go to the center of our being and pass through that center into the very center of God we get in immediate touch with this divine creating energy . . . that the divine energy may have the freedom to forward the evolution of consciousness in us and through us, as a part of the whole, in the whole of the creation.”

Then there is Henri Nouwen who wrote, “[T]he God who dwells in our inner sanctuary is the same as the one who dwells in the inner sanctuary of each human being.” (Here and Now by Henri Nouwen, p. 22).

In Richard Foster’s book he wrote, “Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center.” (Streams of Living Water by Richard Foster, 1998, beginning of chapter 2 – a quote by Thomas Kelly).

And in another of his books, Foster wrote, “[Even people] who have yet to turn their lives over to Jesus Christ – can and should practice them. [spiritual disciplines].” (Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster, p. 2).

These are supposedly Christian books and they are read by many Christians and they are wrong, they are not of God!

Brennan Manning wrote in his book, “[I]f I find Christ, I will find my true self and if I find my true self, I will find Christ.” (Abba’s Child by Brennan Manning, p. 125).

In His book, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, Matthew Fox, a former Catholic priest and was excommunicated from the Church for his heretical teachings, now an Episcopalian priest, wrote,

We are all royal persons, creative, godly, divine, person of beauty and grace. We are all Cosmic Christ's, "other Christ." But what good is this if we do not know it.

- Matthew Fox, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, p. 137

In this same book he wrote,

Divinity is found in all creatures. The divine name from Exodus 3:14, "I Am who I Am," is appropriated by Jesus who shows us how to embrace our own divinity. The Cosmic Christ is the "I am" in every creature. The divine mystery and miracle of existence is laid bare in the unique existence of each atom, each galaxy, each tree, bird, fish, dog, flower, star, rock and human. Meister Eckhart says that "in this breakthrough I discover that God and I are one."

- Matthew Fox, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, p. 154

M. Scott Peck again tells us,

If you want to know the closest place to look for grace, it is within yourself. If you desire wisdom greater than your own, you can find it inside you. . . . To put it plainly, our unconscious is God. God within us. We were part of God all the time.

- M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled*, p. 281

Do you see how this lie is growing and not only in the secular world, but in the church today! And, like I said, I truly believe this is what “the lie” is all about here in II Thessalonians 2:11.

It was the lie that was given to Eve in the Garden, that you shall be as God and it is the lie that is out there today, that we are gods! I think that this Last Day’s world religion will be focused on this lie, that we are gods!

And there truly is more regarding this lie that is growing in the church. Health, wealth and prosperity teachers, these televangelists have been teaching we are gods for years and now many in the church are believing them.

Some of you might know these, I hate to call them teachers, because they are not teachers of God, but I guess false teachers. There is Morris Cerullo who says, “You’re not looking at Morris Cerullo, you’re looking at God. You’re looking at Jesus.” I don’t think so!

Kenneth Copeland said, “You don’t have a god in you, you are one.”

And he said, “. . . Say this and repeat it so it don’t upset you too bad . . . When I read the Bible where (Jesus) says, ‘I am,’ I say, ‘Yes, I am, too!’” Not exactly! In fact, not at all! Creation telling His Creator that he is god! Foolishness.

Benny Hinn said this, “I am a ‘little messiah’ walking on earth.” Little yes, Messiah no!

Kenneth Hagin said, “You are as much the incarnation of God as Jesus Christ was.” Wrong! Not even close.

Earl Paulk said, “Just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, so God has little god’s.” That is true with dogs and cats, but not with God!

And it is hard to believe these things that are being taught, so Benny Hinn tries to Justify these teachings by saying, “Kenneth Hagin has a teaching a lot of people have problems with it, yet *it is absolute truth*. Kenneth Copeland has a teaching - many Christians have put holes in it, but *it’s divine truth*. Hagin and Copeland say, ‘You are God, ye are God!’”

Do you see the problem with his reasoning? Benny Hinn says that it is “absolute truth,” and it is “divine truth,” and yet Christians are able to “put holes” in this teaching. You see, the word of God exposes that fact that this is a lie!

But here we are, in the twenty first century, in 2018 and what was examined and exposed years ago is now embraced! Because we refuse to earnestly contend for the faith we allow false doctrine, false teaching to come into the church and now it is flooding in and it is being embraced!

Let me show you how America’s pastor is leading people into New Age teaching and the people love it! You may have heard of and you may even have read Rick Warren’s book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. I don’t recommend it and you will see one of the reasons why.

In the book Rick has one of his main themes of “hope” and “purpose.” What is interesting to me is that he cites Dr. Bernie Siegel, who is a veteran New Age leader and he even has a spirit-guide named George.

Now think about that one for a minute. If George is curious, does that make him Curious George! Sorry, but with as heavy as this is, a little humor is not bad, and I know you are thinking that is just a little humor!

Now here is the problem. Rick quotes Ephesians 4:6 from the New Century Version and it conveys the idea that God is “in” everything, which is foundational to New Age teaching. The NCV has this verse like this, “He rules everything and is everywhere and is in everything.”

Compare that to the KJV, “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” You see, very different!

Not only that, but Rick tells us regarding God, that the Bible says, “He rules everything and is everywhere and is in everything.” (Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 88). I am sorry, but check out New Age teaching and that is foundational, as I have said!

Also, in *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren quotes Eugene Peterson’s Bible version or I should say abomination more than any other Bible version. What is wrong with that, what is wrong with *The Message*? Listen carefully,

One of the many examples of the New Age implications of *The Message* is seen in Eugene Peterson’s paraphrasing of the Lord’s Prayer. Where most translations read “in earth, as it is in heaven,” Peterson inserts the occult/New Age phrase “as above, so below.” The significance of this mystical occult saying is seen clearly in *As Above, So Below*, a book published in 1992 by the editors of *New Age* journal. Chief editor Ronald S. Miller describes how the occult/magical saying “as above, so below” conveys the “fundamental truth about the universe” – the teaching that “we are all one” because God is “immanent” or “within” everyone and everything.

- Warren Smith, *A “Wonderful” Deception*, p. 18

Now let me tie this into another topic that is very New Age and is coming into the church today. Listen to the definition of this phrase, “as above, so below.” We are told,

This phrase comes from the beginning of The Emerald Tablet and embraces the entire system of traditional and modern magic which was inscribed upon the tablet in cryptic wording by Hermes Trismegistus. The significance of this phrase is that it is believed to hold the key to all mysteries. All systems of magic are claimed to function by this formula. “‘That which is above is the same as that which is below’ . . . The universe is the same as God, God is the same as man.”

- As Above, So Below (http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/a/below_above.html)

Do you see what is being said here? It is saying that we are God because God is in everything! How can that be?

And as I have said many times before, all those New Age bookstores are not around anymore, they don't have to be. These books are in Christian bookstores and they are selling like hotcakes!

I truly believe that the world, including the so-called Christian church or I should say apostate church will go, they will come to believe they are god or part of the god consciousness, they will be and are being deceived right now and it will open the door to the One-World Religion because if we are all god then we are all one!

Let me share this warning from someone who was in the New Age. This is what she had to say about this Christ Consciousness or that we are God. She wrote,

It is not uncommon for me to use the term “Christ Consciousness” when discussing matters relating to New Age philosophies. Indeed, it is a commonly used buzz word in New Age and Occult circles, and I myself spent a fair amount of time trying to achieve this supposed level of enlightenment prior to becoming a Christian. . . .

To much of the non-Christian world, Jesus is dangerous. If He lived, and if He died, and if He rose again – this creates a conundrum for non-Christians. Some focus their time trying (and failing) to prove that He never existed, or that if He did exist, He surely was not God. However, with ample evidence that He indeed did live, that He was indeed crucified, and He was, in fact, resurrected. . . . some have adopted an entirely different approach to undermining Jesus Christ. Rather than deny His existence, they have attempted to redefine His purpose, and have created a designer guru-Christ – one who was really no different than you or I . . . just more “in tune” with his spirituality.

This is the most common thread throughout the New Age paganism that we see today. It is a mish-mosh of Hinduism, Buddhism, neo-Paganism, and gnosticism. And while it sounds to some like a revolutionary sort of “Age of Aquarius” philosophy of Oneness and enlightenment, it really is based upon that lie of old, “Ye shall be as gods.” (Gen. 3-5) . . .

Not every New Ager is required to believe or embrace Jesus . . . but for those who do, they will refer to the highest state of spiritual awareness as being “Christed.” They will have united with the source of Creation, thus making themselves god. According to the Center for Christ Consciousness:

Christ consciousness is the state of awareness of our true nature, our higher self, and our birthright as children of God. Christ consciousness is our living expression as a child of Spirit as we unfold our own divine life plan onto the earth plane: bringing heaven to earth. Living in the reality of our “christed” self is actually being fully alive and invested in who we truly are. In our “christed” self we live as inspiration for others to seek this for themselves so we can collectively move our planet forward into the divine plan for planetary transformation and glorification.

Popular website “I AM University” (the I AM stands for Integrated Ascended Master), which was founded by influential guru Dr. Joshua David Stone, says it must more plainly:

The Christ consciousness is not just for Christians. The Christ consciousness, the Buddha consciousness, the Krishna consciousness, God consciousness, and the consciousness of all religions are all the same thing. Many people have a lot of negative programming behind their religious upbringing. It is important here not to get caught up in the words, or semantics. It is also important to understand that whatever religion, or spiritual path you are on, I suggest you keep it.

The new religion of the future is the one that honors and recognizes all religions and all spiritual paths, for they all lead to the same place. . . .

The axiom “there is nothing New about the New Age” is accurate on more than one level. While the New Age movement appeared to go somewhat underground for a time (it never really left, just repackaged itself), a burgeoning new interest has made way for previously debunked and defamed kooks who rose to prominence in the 70’s and 80’s to re-emerge . . .

- <http://extraordinaryintelligence.com/the-christ-consciousness-lie/>

I truly see this god consciousness being a tool that Satan uses to draw people together. Keep in mind that at the tower of Babel the people were scattered and now, we are coming together and the center of this is religion.

Not Christianity, but religion because all religions except Christianity is based upon a works theology. You have to do this, you can't do that, and you work your way in. And thus, as all have this god consciousness they will be in tune, not with God but with the demonic world and they will be drawn together into this one world religion!

Now, before I close I need to deal with one more topic. As some read these verses here in II Thessalonians they come to the conclusion that if you have rejected the truth before the Tribulation Period starts, then, once it does start you can't be saved!

In II Thessalonians 2:12 we are told, **“that they may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”**

I guess I don't see that. During the Tribulation Period there will be millions of people who not only get saved but are martyred for their faith in Christ.

What I see here are those who are taken in by the Antichrist's lying signs and wonders and they receive the mark of the beast. It is those who can't be saved. Listen to what John tells us in Revelation 14:9-11, **“Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’”**

You see, by receiving this mark of the beast during the Tribulation Period you are severing all ties with God and you are worshiping the Antichrist and thus, you can't be saved. You have past that point of no return.

I think that is the key here for those who can't be saved. Because, like I have said, there are millions of people, multitudes who come to saving faith during the Tribulation Period and I think that gift of life is open to all except those who receive the mark of the beast!

The lie is out there already and it is growing in the number of people who are buying into it! May we be warned about the danger and know what we believe!

Let me close with these words because, maybe some of you don't see this information as important. But it truly is. Why would God include it if it wasn't important? He wouldn't! We are told,

A lot of preachers avoid the end times because although people find it interesting and informative, it's sometimes difficult to make it immediately relevant and transformative. How much easier it is to read a handful of verses from Proverbs and start instantly to apply their tidy truths to our lives. But what do we do with passages of Scripture that describe the future events from which, by God's grace, we will be rescued?

Let's take a moment, step back, and put ourselves in the place of the Thessalonians who were confused about end-times events. Their confusion led to consternation. They had become concerned that either Paul's promises of salvation for the children of God had been false or they had somehow missed out on Christ's rescue plan.

Are you confused about the end times? Do you watch the news, wondering whether this or that current event might be a sign that the Tribulation has come upon you? Do you see lawlessness among the world leaders and wonder if one of them may be the Antichrist, poised to unleash his hellish fury on all humanity? In short, is your focus on judgment or salvation . . . wrath or rescue? Are your thoughts dwelling on the glorious salvation of 1 Thessalonians 4 or the dreadful judgments of 2 Thessalonians 2? Are you basking in the light . . . or fretting the darkness?

Knowing what the Bible teaches about the future has important implications for how we view the world and where we focus our attention. Those who have a fuzzy, imprecise understanding of the order of future events – like the Thessalonians did – end up being Antichrist-focused, worried that so-and-so political leader might be the man of lawlessness or that such news event might be one of the seals or trumpets of Revelation. But those who have a clear outline of the future – as presented by Paul – are Christ-focused, looking not at the world and its growing darkness, but looking up “to wait for His Son from heaven . . . who rescues us from the wrath to come” (1 Thes. 1:10).

When we have the right information, we will live in faith and hope, not fear and fretting. When we embrace the full story of “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him” (2 Thes. 2:1), we won’t be “quickly shaken” from our composure or “disturbed” by false information (2:2).

Don’t let misinformation drag you down and take your focus off of Christ. Get your facts straight concerning the coming of Christ. Then look up with hope as we “eagerly wait for [the] Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory” (Phil. 3:20-21).

I hope that as we have gone through this chapter so far, that in the midst of the darkness that Paul spoke of, our hope is in the light of God and His soon return! Remember what Paul said in II Thessalonians 2:8, “**And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.**”

Never lose sight of who is in control and let your light so shine that all that you do may glorify our Father in heaven!