
INSTRUCTIONS OF GOD IN THE LETTERS FROM PAUL

DEDUCTIVE LESSON SEVEN

2 Thessalonians 2

Day One: Verses 1–12

Read through 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12. These verses are mainly referring to the person identified as Antichrist (or the Antichrist). While there have been and will continue to be many antichrists—those who set themselves up in opposition to (or substitution of) the true Christ—our verses today speak of the final and worst of these: the ultimate Antichrist (hence the capital A).

Although we will spend both today and tomorrow looking at Antichrist and some of the events of the last days, we will only scratch the surface of what is to be studied about the end times, and you may come away with more questions than you started with. A proper study of the end times is encouraged for any Christian, and a good commentary on the book of Revelation is a great place to start.

1. Verses 1–3 seem to indicate that there was something troubling the Thessalonians. What did Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy say in these verses to make things clear to them?

2. What is Antichrist called (in verse 3) and what will he do (in verse 4)?

3. What other characteristics will he have (verses 9–10)?

4. What did the prophet Daniel have to say about Antichrist?

Daniel 7:25

Daniel 8:24–25

Daniel 11:36–37

5. Many evangelical churches, including Harvest Christian Fellowship, believe that the next event on the prophetic calendar will be the Rapture of the church. Shortly following the Rapture, Antichrist will appear on the scene and “confirm a covenant with many” (Daniel 9:27). The beginning of this covenant (which most likely will allow the Jews to worship in their temple and perform their daily sacrifices, as they did in the past) will mark the beginning of the seven-year period of time known as the Tribulation. For the first half of these seven years, Antichrist will have a reputation of a man of peace, and will gain the loyalty of the world. However, after three-and-a-half years, he will break his covenant with the Jews and desecrate their temple, setting himself on high. This is part of what Daniel called the “abomination of desolation”. What do the following verses add?

Daniel 9:27

Daniel 11:31

Mark 13:14

Scripture Memory: Our Scripture Memory passage is 1 Thessalonians 5:19–21.

“Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good.” 1 Thessalonians 5:19–21

Day Two: Verses 1–12

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 again.

1. Verse 9 tells us that the coming of Antichrist will be with power, signs, and lying wonders. One of these wonders is described in Revelation 13:3. Read Revelation 13:1–3. What do these verses tell us about Antichrist (the beast)?

2. Second Thessalonians 2:9 says, “The coming of the lawless one [the Antichrist] is according to the working of Satan [the dragon].” What does Revelation 13:4 say to confirm this?

3. Continue reading Revelation 13 (verses 5–8). What else do you read about Antichrist?

4. What does 2 Thessalonians 2:8 say will be the final end for Antichrist?

2. Why is the restraining force of the Holy Spirit still in place? Read 2 Peter 3:3–11, and record your thoughts.

Scripture Memory: Fill in the blanks from memory.

“Do not _____ the Spirit. Do not despise _____. _____ all things; hold _____ what is _____.” — Thessalonians __:19–__

Day Four: Verses 11–12

Reread 2 Thessalonians 2:11–12.

1. These verses are similar to Romans 1:24–25. What do you read there?

2. Who is truth (John 14:6)?

3. Write out the verses below, substituting your answer from question 2 for the word truth (or Your truth).

Psalm 33:4

Psalm 43:3

Psalm 51:6

Psalm 86:11

Psalm 91:4

Psalm 119:151, 160a

Psalm 145:18

Optional Study: The exercise above is just the tip of the iceberg. If you have a concordance or other means to search the Scriptures, search the word truth (there are more than 200 verses containing this word!), and continue this study on your own.

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.

"Do not _____ the _____. Do not _____ _____ all things;
hold _____ what is _____." _____ : _____ - _____

Day Five: Verses 13–17

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17.

1. Verse 13 presents us with another opportunity to substitute the name Jesus for the word truth. Why do Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy give thanks to God?

2. What do these men encourage the Thessalonian church to do, in verse 15?

3. Verses 16 and 17 contain a prayer or blessing from Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. What do they pray that Jesus Christ and God the Father will do for the Thessalonian church?

Terms and Definitions: Predestination

In today's reading we find the phrases, "God from the beginning chose you for salvation" (verse 13) and "belief in the truth to which He called you" (verse 14). These phrases bring us to a discussion of the theological topic of predestination— a subject which has caused much debate and dispute among Christians of various sects and denominations. The following Bible dictionary explanation is a good summary of this subject:

Predestination – the biblical teaching that declares the sovereignty of God over human beings in such a way that the freedom of the human will is also preserved.

Two major concepts are involved in the biblical meaning of predestination. First, God, who is all-powerful in the universe, has foreknown and predestined the course of human history and the lives of individuals. If He were not in complete control of human events, He would not be sovereign and, thus, would not be God. Second, God's predestination of human events does not eliminate human choice. A thorough understanding of how God can maintain His sovereignty and still allow human freedom seems to be reserved for His infinite mind alone. Great minds have struggled with this problem for centuries.

Two views of predestination are prominent today. One view, known as Calvinism, holds that God offers irresistible grace to those whom He elects to save. The other view, known as Arminianism, insists that God's grace is the source of redemption but that it can be resisted by people through free choice. In Calvinism, God chooses the believer; in Arminianism, the believer chooses God.ⁱ

The following scriptures have been used to support different extremes of the theological debate. What do they say about our choices or God's calling?

1 John 4:19

John 3:16

2 Peter 3:9b

Matthew 10:32

John 15:15–19

Romans 10:9

So, do we choose God, or does God choose us? It seems evident from these Scriptures that the answer to both is "Yes!" We are the bride of Christ, and God has designed our marriage to be based on genuine and mutual love for one another. In Jeremiah 31:3, God says to His bride, "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."

Scripture Memory: Write this week's Scripture Memory verse completely from memory.

" _____

_____." _____ : _____ - _____

Day Six: Personal Application

1. Thank God for the restraining force of the Holy Spirit! Imagine how corrupt and immoral this world would be without the restraining force of the Holy Spirit working through the church. Spend some time in prayer thanking the Lord for the gift of the Holy Spirit and asking for a refill of the Spirit in your life. Ask Him to allow you to be used in His work of restraining evil in this dark world.

2. Picture your loved ones, who have not received the salvation of Jesus Christ, living in the last days. Think about how they will be tricked and deceived by Antichrist. Think about how "God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12). These people are not some nameless, faceless, distant group of non-believers. You use their names and see their faces on a daily basis. Write the names or initials of three people you know who don't know Christ, and then pray for each of them by name.

3. This is a simple, yet profound, equation: (Jesus = Truth). Write five sentences about this topic below using the acronym T-R-U-T-H.

T _____

R _____

U _____

T _____

H _____
