

"The Mystery Already At Work"

2 Thessalonians 2: 6-8

March 23, 2014

III We must pay much closer attention to living with self discipline under God's word, (2 Ths. 1: 1-3: 18)

B. The World Is Currently Under The Dominion Of The Man Of Lawlessness Who Promotes Lawlessness (vs. 1 - 12)

2. Perseverance Is Necessary Because God Has Purposed To Fully Reveal The Mystery In Due Season, (vs. 6 - 8)

Message Emphasis: Many today do not realize that the "Man of Lawlessness" is already at work and openly deceiving those who are not grounded in their belief in the Gospel. This is not apart from the divine activity of God who is restraining the work of the evil one. This is the mystery that is already at work.

Counterfeiting God's system of truth. In line with his purpose to be like the Most High, Satan promotes a system that we may call "the lie" ... Satan's counterfeit system may be irreligious. He may deny the existence of God or His control. To explain the world, he substitutes evolution for creation, uniformitarianism for providence, human progress for divine salvation, and man's utopia for God's kingdom on earth. Atheism, agnosticism, pragmatism, existentialism, and relativism are his substitutes for truth... However, Satan also promotes counterfeit religions. He authors or encourages nonbiblical religions or distortions of the true religion. In this latter category, we find (1) false ministers, Satan's messengers who transform themselves into messengers of light... Satan may be found in the chair of theology or the pulpit... Satan also promotes false doctrine. These he propagates through his demons, who teach works-righteousness... During this age we also find false followers. They profess to believe in Christ, but they are Satan's counterfeits... Counteracting God's sovereign rule. Rebellion against God's personal and constitutional authority is the essence of Satan's every expression. A rebel at heart, he is a rebel in every deed. He cannot, of course, step outside of God's overall sovereign control; but within the limits of his creaturely freedom, he is totally anti-God. ~ C. Fred Dickason

1) We Do Not Have To Be In Doubt As To Who Is In Control Of The World , (vs. 6)

Am I willing to accept what I should already know?

⁶ **And you know** (Perf.Act.Ind) **what is restraining** (Pres.Act.Part - neuter) **him now so that he may be revealed** (Aor.Pas.Inf) **in his time.**

- We know what is restraining the man of lawlessness, God's ordination - "Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he **HAS** is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD." (Job 1:9-12, ESV)
- We should know that God is revealing his lawless activity - "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them." (Romans 1:18-19, ESV)

2) We Do Not Have To Guess About What Is Happening In The World Today, (vs. 7)

Am I willing to accept the One who has told me all things?

⁷ **For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work** (Pres.Mid.Ind) . **Only he who now restrains** (Pres.Act.Part) **it will do so until he is** (Aor.Mid.Subj) **out of the way.**

- We should not be surprised by what we see happening in the world - "Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?... " (1 John 2:18-22)
- We should not be surprised when things get progressively worse - "Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."" (2 Timothy 2:14-19, ESV)

3) We Do Not Have To Worry Over How Things Will End For The World, (vs. 8)

Am I willing to accept what I have been told about the end?

⁸ **And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.**

- There is only one reason why the man of lawlessness is to be revealed; to be destroyed - "As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. "I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:9-14, ESV)

*****What Must I Do To Be Saved? *****

Message Directive: Look to Christ for the salvation of your soul; ONLY in Christ can you truly rise above the deception that causes us to doubt God's goodness to His children.

3. Falsehood & Deception Are A Present Reality To Bring The Destruction Of Those Who Don't Believe, (vs. 9 - 12)

- A. The wrath of God is a very present reality governed by the ordained decrees of God, (vs. 2: 1 - 17)
- B. The wrath of God is a very present reality that must be avoided even in its temporal aspects, (vs. 3: 1 - 18)