

We must stand firm on the truth
and not be swayed by false teaching
2 Thessalonians 2

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- The Day of the Lord won't happen until the man of lawlessness is revealed.
- Some of the Thessalonians had been swayed by the false teaching that the Day of the Lord had already come.
- This section (2:1–12) is also written in couplets like Hebrew poetry about the Day of the Lord.
- They may be wondered if they were already in the time of tribulation, from which they had been promised deliverance in 1 Thessalonians 5.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- Paul warned them to not be deceived by (verse 2).
- Some wonder if they got this idea from a forged letter, considering Paul's comment at the end of the letter (3:17).
- When we were discussing 1 Thessalonians, I talked about the fact that the closing greeting of the letter was in his own handwriting.
- Satan is always trying to attack us with an onslaught of false teachings about everything from denying Christ as the way to salvation (2 Peter 2:1) to believing Christ had already come and they had missed it.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- Paul taught that this could not be true because two things must happen first: (1) the rebellion, and (2) the revealing of the man of lawlessness
- Neither of these events had happened (verse 3). He taught them, and they should have known (verse 5).
- They needed to test all the spirits by the truth they had been taught. If it doesn't line up with sound doctrine, it's a false prophet.
- Do not let yourself be deceived.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- The Greek word for rebellion (*apostasia*) is where we get the word apostasy.
- It is more than just a moral rebellion, it's rejection of the Gospel.
- This refers to those who have not genuinely made a decision for Christ, but are "Christians" in name only.
- Paul also warned Timothy that in the last days people would leave the Church by deceitful spirits and teachings (1 Timothy 4:1), and Peter and Jude warned the same (2 Peter 3:3–7; Jude 17–19).

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- Paul draws on the teachings of Jesus when he speaks about this apostasy and about the man of lawlessness or “son of destruction” (2:3).
- The “man of lawlessness” is a Semitic idiom referring to someone whose life is characterized by opposition to God’s reign.
- Jesus taught that one of the signs was the “abomination of desolation” in the holy place of the temple (Matthew 24:15), citing the prophet Daniel (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- The “abomination of desolation” is an idolatrous image that will be set up by the final Antichrist.
 - He is called the “beast” in the book of Revelation.
 - He is called the “man of lawlessness” here
- This will occur in the restored temple in Jerusalem.
- The “abomination” refers to a great sin and the “desolation” refers to something that desecrates the temple.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- Worshipping a false god or idol in the temple is an abomination that desecrates the temple.
- In the ancient Near East, worshiping the image or idol of a king or god was the same thing as worshipping that king or god themselves.
- Worshipping an idol or image of the Antichrist is the same thing as worshipping the Antichrist himself.
- The Antichrist will set up an image of himself in the temple and demand that people worship it.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

- Daniel said that the Antichrist will make a covenant of peace with the people for seven years but break it halfway through (Daniel 9:27).
- He will sit in the temple of God, declare himself to be God, and force people to worship his image and himself (2:3–4).
- Power will be given to the Antichrist over every nation (Revelation 13:7), and he will begin a worldwide reign of terror, blasphemy, and murder (Daniel 7:25). After three and a half years, his brief reign will be brought to an end by the second coming of Christ (Revelation 19:11–21).

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

- Those who delight in wickedness and refuse to believe the truth will perish.
- Paul told the Thessalonians that the “mystery of lawlessness” was already at work, but the lawless one was being restrained for now (2:6–7).
- He said they knew why the lawless one was being restrained.
- We don’t necessarily know what he meant by that, but Genesis 6:3 tells us that the Holy Spirit is the restrainer of sin, so we can assume that it is God who is holding the lawless one back for now.

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

- Peter gives us a clue as to why God is not yet allowing the end to come (2 Peter 3).
- Peter said God's time is not like our time. We may think thousands of years is a long time, but to God, it's like an instant. God is not being slow, He's being patient.
- He's taking His time to allow more and more people to repent and return to Him (2 Peter 3:8–10). Paul told the Thessalonians that the man of lawlessness will be revealed "in his time" (2:6).

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

- When the lawless one is revealed, he will be allowed to reign for just three and a half years, and then Jesus will destroy him with “the breath of his mouth” (2:8).
- In Revelation, it’s a double-edged sword that comes from his mouth (Revelation 1:16; 19:15).
- This is reminiscent of God’s Word being described as a double-edged sword in Hebrews 4:12.

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

- Along with the lawless one, the wicked will also perish.
- Paul defined the wicked as those who “did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2:12).
- These people were deceived by the lawless one, who did have supernatural powers (false signs and wonders) by the power of Satan, not God (2:9–10).
- The devastating destiny of unbelievers is clear in this passage; they are condemned (2:12).

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

- Yet it should motivate all believers to share the Gospel with as many people as possible.
- This solemn truth should give us a sense of urgency to tell people about Jesus.
- Even if we are not in the last days when the lawless one is revealed, the “mystery of lawlessness is already at work” (2:7).
- Satan is at work in every generation to lead people astray from the truth, but God desires that all people be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

- Jesus commanded us to go to all the nations to share the Gospel (Matthew 28:18–20).
- Jesus said that when the Gospel of the kingdom is preached in the whole world, then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).
- The message of this passage is to preach the Gospel.
- Don't expect that everyone will accept your message, because many people will be deceived, choose to reject the Gospel, and love the darkness instead of the light (John 3:19–20). That shouldn't stop us from trying

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

- Those of us who believe must stand firm until the end.
- Now that Paul had corrected the false teaching, he turned back to thanksgiving for the Thessalonians.
- He repeated again that it was the apostles' duty to give thanks for them (v. 13). In 1:3, he gave thanks for their faith and love.
- Here he gave thanks that God chose them as the "firstfruits" to be saved.
- As part of the first generation of believers, they were the firstfruits of the Church, but they were not the last generation.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

- In contrast to the unbelievers, who are marked by unrighteousness and will believe the Antichrist's lies.
- The Thessalonian believers were marked by sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth (2:13).
- Paul reminded them that they would obtain the glory of Christ (v. 14).
- They would be glorified in Him at the Second Coming (1:12).
- They were to stand firm and hold to the traditions they had been taught.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

- Application: realize that every day is a spiritual battle between the forces of good and wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:10–18).
- Just as Paul admonished the the Ephesians and the Thessalonians to “stand firm” when he talked about spiritual warfare.
- That is what we must do today as we diligently share the gospel with others and support world missions.

Ask Kerby



Who is the beast? Is he the same as the Antichrist? Why different names?

Antichrist - Lawless One

- The Antichrist is referred to in many different ways:
 - Son of lawlessness - 2 Thessalonians 2:3
 - Son of destruction - 2 Thessalonians 2:3
 - The lawless one - 2 Thessalonians 2:8
 - The antichrist - 1 John 2:22
 - The beast - Revelation 11:7
 - His number is 666 - Revelation 13:18

Numbers in Revelation

- Two is the number of witness - two witnesses in the Tribulation (Rev. 11:3).
- Three is the divine number - Father, Son, Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:19).
- Four is the number of earth - Beast has four living creatures around throne.
- Six is the number of man - Mark of the beast is 666.
 - Man is the number 6 repeated 3 times which is the God number.
 - That translates into “man pretending to be God.”
- Seven is the perfect number.

Ask Kerby



Mark 13:10 - "But the gospel must first be preached to all nations."

What about the North Sentinel Island where the Sentinelese will not anyone come onto their island?



What Does “All Nations” Mean?

- When Jesus commanded his followers to make disciples of all nations, he used the Greek words *ta ethne*.
- That could best be translated all “ethnic groups.”
- Today we refer to them as people groups.
- We have two different categories:
 - Unreached people groups (7,000)
 - Unengaged people groups (3,000)

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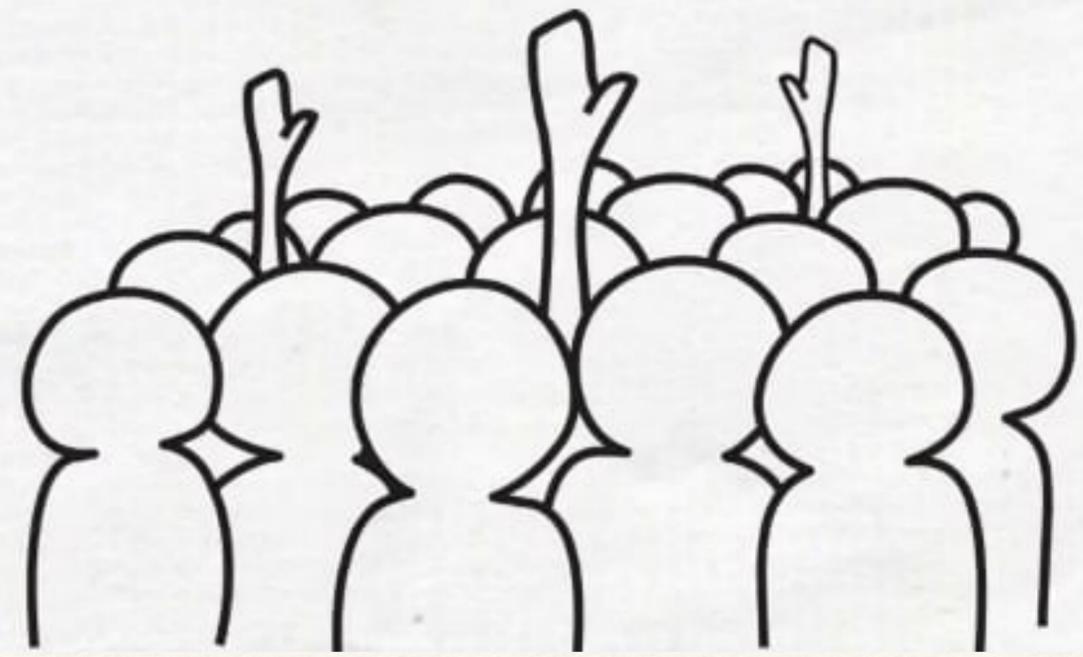
PEOPLE GROUP

TA ETHNE

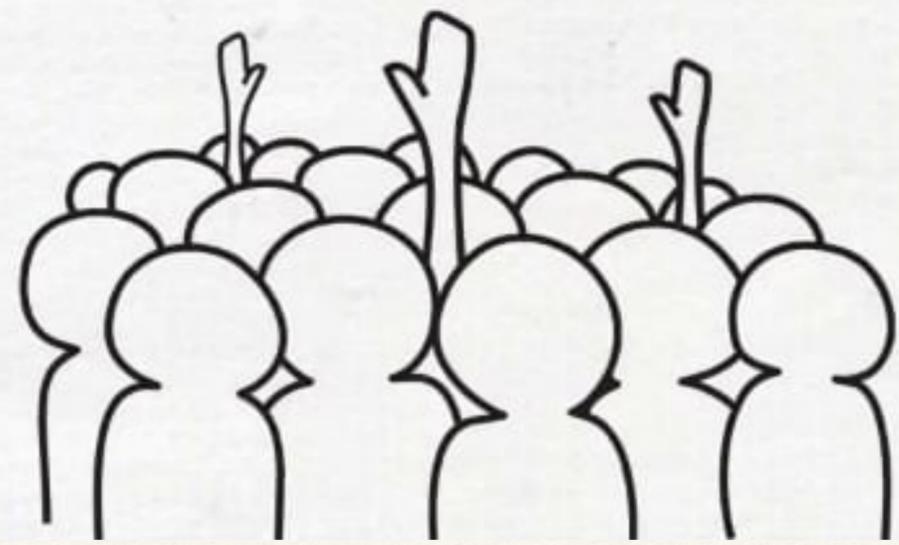
ALL ETHNIC GROUPS
OR PEOPLE GROUPS

COMMON HISTORY, LANGUAGE, BELIEFS AND IDENTITY

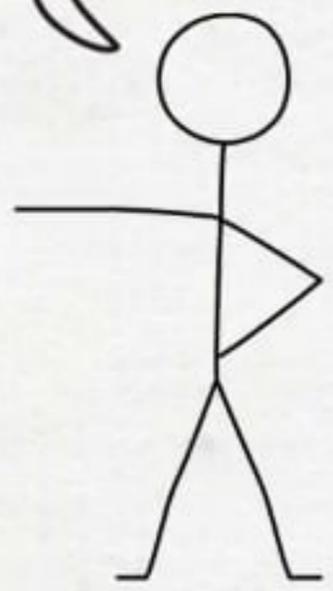
"US"



"THEM"



GO AND MAKE
DISCIPLES OF
ALL NATIONS



The Great Commission

- Over the last 50 years, world mission groups have made significant progress in reaching many of these unreached people groups.
- Many organizations, from Bible translators to church planters, believe they will have even more success by the end of this decade in reaching so many of the people in the unreached people groups.
- Technology may be another way we might be able to reach to these people closed off from the world by geography, governments, or superstition.
- Pray for the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)