

IN GOD'S TIME
BIG IDEA: We are called to live with an "eager patience" for Jesus' return as we wait on God's perfect timing.
DATE: Wednesday, November 11 and Sunday, November 15, 2026
SCRIPTURE: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (CSB)

OPENING QUESTION

Can you spot a counterfeit bill? Do you know what key characteristics to look for*Or do you think you could tell the difference between Dr. Pepper and Mr. Pibb? Sprite and Slice? Coke and RC Cola? Why or why not?*

SETTING THE STAGE

The purpose of Bible prophecy is not for us to make a calendar but to build character. Paul emphasized this fact in both of his Thessalonian letters, and our Lord warned us not to set dates for His coming. Date setters are usually *upsetters*, and that is exactly what happened in the Thessalonican assembly. Someone had deceived the believers into thinking they were already living in the day of the Lord. The believers were instantly shaken by this teaching and continued to be deeply troubled. Had God changed the program? Had not Paul promised them deliverance from the tribulation? To calm their hearts and stabilize their faith, Paul explained that they were not in the day of the Lord. The reason was simple: That day could not arrive until certain other events had taken place. Paul then stated the prophetic events that make up God's timetable.

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (CSB)
Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him: We ask you, brothers and sisters, [2]not to be easily upset or troubled, either by a prophecy or by a message or by a letter supposedly from us, alleging that the day of the Lord has come. [3]Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. [4]He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in God's temple, proclaiming that he himself is God. [5]Don't you remember that when I was still with you I used to tell you about this? [6]And you know what currently restrains him, so that he will be revealed in his time. [7]For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but the one now restraining will do so until he is out of the way, [8]and then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of his mouth and will bring him to nothing at the appearance of his coming. [9]The coming of the lawless one is based on Satan's working, with every kind of miracle, both signs and wonders serving the lie, [10]and with every wicked deception among those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth and so be saved. [11]For

this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe the lie, [12]so that all will be condemned – those who did not believe the truth but delighted in unrighteousness.

DISCUSSION

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
READ 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 6-7

What is it about the rapture that poses a challenge for theologians and individual believers? Why might the church need to be out of the world before Satan enacts his plan?

Paul mentioned a restraining force that even today is helping keep everything on schedule. Who or what is this restrainer? How is this restrainer at work in the world even now (see 2 Thess. 2:7b)?

THE REVELATION OF ANTICHRIST
READ 2 Thessalonians 2:3-5, 8A

Why do some Christians believe with such confidence that they know the identity of the Antichrist? Is it important for us to know who the Antichrist is? Why or why not?

The Greek prefix anti- has two meanings: "against" and "instead of." What does this tell us about the role of the Antichrist?

Why would the Antichrist take on such positive character traits? How does this align with some of Satan's other familiar tactics in our lives?

Why do you think Satan desires worship?

THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST
READ 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12

- Why do you think Satan chooses to imitate Christ? What is the point of that? How does Satan do that even in our lives today? Why is there power in imitation?
- As you imagine evil increasing during the tribulation, what do you think will occur in our society?
- In what ways can you see our society becoming more and more vulnerable to deception by signs and wonders? How can we stand guard against the lies?

GOING FORWARD

How much better is it to follow the example of the Thessalonican believers who received the Word of God - the truth - and were saved. Have you received the truth? Do you know the truth so well that you can spot a fake? We are called to live with an "eager patience" for Jesus' return as we wait on God's perfect timing.

Wiersbe, Warren. *Be Ready: Living in Light of Christ's Return.* David C. Cook, ©1979
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