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Faith Bible Church
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<http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

Personal Study of the Bible-54
2 Thessalonians 2: The Antichrist.2

Read 2 Thessalonians 2 in the three different Bible versions below, paying close attention to the Satanic, deceptive power behind the Antichrist

New American Standard: 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 **Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. 5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. 13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 14 And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us. 16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, 17 comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.**

Young's Literal Translation: 2 Thessalonians 2:1 And we ask you, brethren, in regard to the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him, 2 that ye be not quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither through spirit, neither through word, neither through letters as through us, as that the day of Christ hath arrived; 3 **let not any one deceive you in any manner, because -- if the falling away may not come first, and the man of sin be revealed - - the son of the destruction, 4 who is opposing and is raising himself up above all called God or worshipped, so that he in the sanctuary of God as God hath sat down, shewing himself off that he is God -- the day doth not come. 5 Do ye not remember that, being yet with you, these things I said to you? 6 and now, what is keeping down ye have known, for his being revealed in his own time, 7 for the secret of the lawlessness doth already work, only he who is keeping down now**

will hinder -- till he may be out of the way, 8 and then shall be revealed the Lawless One, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the manifestation of his presence, 9 him, whose presence is according to the working of the Adversary, in all power, and signs, and lying wonders, 10 and in all deceitfulness of the unrighteousness in those perishing, because the love of the truth they did not receive for their being saved, 11 and because of this shall God send to them a working of delusion, for their believing the lie, 12 that they may be judged -- all who did not believe the truth, but were well pleased in the unrighteousness. 13 And we -- we ought to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, that God did choose you from the beginning to salvation, in sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, 14 to which He did call you through our good news, to the acquiring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; 15 so, then, brethren, stand ye fast, and hold the deliverances that ye were taught, whether through word, whether through our letter; 16 and may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and our God and Father, who did love us, and did give comfort age-during, and good hope in grace, 17 comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.

New King James: 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 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. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. 16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, 17 comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

There are two dangers every believer needs to be on guard about with reference to Satan, his power, and his influences. First, avoid an unhealthy obsession with him as characterized by the Word of Faith movement as well as most charismatic “ministries.” The occult activity in these “Bible only” anti-philosophical, anti-intellectual ministries has been well established (cf., [http://www.richardghowe.com/Cults%20and%20Isms%20of%20Today%20-%20Handout%2012%20\(slides\)%20-%20Word%20of%20Faith.pdf](http://www.richardghowe.com/Cults%20and%20Isms%20of%20Today%20-%20Handout%2012%20(slides)%20-%20Word%20of%20Faith.pdf) . A second danger is to make the serious error of not being aware of his machinations to corrupt and destroy your

understanding of God, creation, reality, the Bible, and spiritual life. Satan has an aggressive plan to destroy your spiritual life; and he knows he can be far more successful if you do not recognize his existence or wiles. My guess is that if a survey was taken of Hollywood stars as to belief in the existence of God, a Supernatural Being, the percentage would be very close to 100%. However, if you asked the same people if they believed in the existence of Satan, very few would answer in the affirmative. They believe in a Shirley McClaine type of positive-feeling god, but not Satan. They are totally unaware that the god they believe in really is Satan himself. Read 2 Cor. 11:13-15 where Satan is called an angel of ____ .

Of all of Satan's power, the greatest, the most impressive, is his power to deceive. He is breathtakingly brilliant. While he is only allowed by God to perform certain miraculous deeds on earth at certain times (like against Job), his power to deceive includes the ____ ____ (1 John 5:19). Satan's Antichrist will be the most intelligent, charming, handsome, winsome, articulate, and "encouraging" person who ever lived. He will promise people all kinds of "blessings" in the name of God. Even believers will be deceived and think of the Antichrist as the most magnificent man of God to ever live. They will love Him. Read Matthew 24:24.

Satan loves it when believers do not recognize the extent of his massive influence in the various church movements. I know of no church on earth that has not been or is not influenced by his deception. This includes the doctrinal churches in which I have grown up. The issue is not has any church been under his deception, the issue is if the church is progressively moving out of his deception. All men, without exception, have fallen natures that have strong proclivities to suppress the God of the Bible. Even strong believers always have in them the strong tendency to ignore whole truth, total truth, on the nature of God. Believers, like unbelievers, really want a God that makes them comfortable. They do not like a God of judgment and wrath; read Romans 1:16-31. Some want an emotional God, some want a God who blesses them, some want a God who does not hold them accountable, some want a God who does not make demands of them, some want a God with "doctrinal" lingo so they can become spiritual by mechanics and gnosticism (knowledge) . *We all* have the ailment of wanting to create God in our image, we must be aware of this and constantly make adjustments to advance out of this darkness into a fuller understanding of 'Ehyeh as He is. This will never take place for the believer who only goes to church to get an encouraging message from a God of his own choosing. Many believers are totally wrapped up in this world with no drive to really understand their God; they just want God to solve their problems so they can continue on their cosmic kingdom building. They have no desire to leave this earth to be with their Lord because they are too busy building their earthly kingdom. They have no desire to really understand Realism. For them, God is mainly a means of handling the pressures of life associated with living for the world. They love faith-rest, but have no desire to understand Esse. Instead of growing in understanding of God, their faith in God and the things of God actually become less over time (though often propped up with fideism) because they have put themselves in a position not to be able to receive the theological faith, hope, and love from the God of the Bible. This is exactly what Satan desires. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-19. He loves it when he can get the believer more focused on work and the details of life than growing in the Realism of the Word of God. He especially loves it when he can get the believer living for the world, all the while thinking they are growing spiritually because they listen to a tape, can quote Bible doctrine, and use faith-rest for the pressure—again, pressure more associated with earthly kingdom building and carnal desires of human approbation rather than a result of advancing spiritually and glorifying Christ in the world.

Satan is alive and well. It really makes no difference if he is personally or directly after you (he probably spends most of his time in the White House), for he has countless demons to do his bidding in distracting you. As I mentioned previously, he loves to operate in the background unnoticed. Consider Matthew 6:13, which should read “deliver us from the Evil One.” The adjective “evil” is not in neuter case, which would make it abstract idea. Rather, it is in the masculine case signifying Satan, “the Evil One.” In the “Lord’s Prayer,” Christ instructs believers to not only pray that God’s name would be hallowed, that His will would be done, that His kingdom would come, for provision of daily bread, for forgiveness, for strength in temptation, but He also instructed believers to pray for protection from the Evil One. Most believers are not even aware that our prayer life should include petitions for protection from Satan’s deceptive influences. We are no match for the brilliant strategies of Satan. Consider what the Lord revealed about Satan, Peter, and Himself in Luke 22:31-32

The believer must know what the ____ of the devil are to be able to stand firm against them; read Ephesians 6:11. The believer must understand God, reality, and the spiritual life in the context of Realism if he ever hopes to ____ all the flaming arrows of the ____ , Eph. 6:16. This requires far more than just quoting passages or principles learned from pastors or fellow believers. There must be a total renovation of the mind as per the philosophy of biblical Realism. Our minds must be trained to see Reality and thus God as such.

I very much appreciate the believers of Faith Bible Church who have preserved through our sometimes difficult studies in Philosophical Realism. You have demonstrated that you really are interested in Truth as such, instead of a feel-good sermon that does not challenge and advance your thinking about God, creation, reality, and the spiritual life. I am so blessed to have believers who really want truth instead of looking for a pastor who weekly suppresses certain truths and only serves up truths according to certain believers’ desires; read 2 Tim. 4:4. Truth is always the issue and those who really want Truth, really want it no matter the effort. For those who really are not interested in Truth/Understanding, it is never worth such effort. They are looking for what they deem as practical [their “good”] instead of honoring God as God and being truly grateful, read Romans 1:21. As we advance in Total Truth this year, let us redouble our efforts in truly understanding our God and thus be enabled to truly live a life of worship, a life of honoring, worshipping, and enjoying the God of the Bible as God, as ‘Ehyeh—the only name of God in the Bible that precisely points to His true *nature* as it relates to all that is (Exod. 3:14).

*In ‘Ehyeh,
Pastor Don Hargrove*