

2 Thessalonians 2:1-8, 13-17

“Together”

November 6, 2016

We live in a world that is increasingly self-centered. We live in a world where deception is a tool to cheat us out of everything that we hold dear. I am not sure who I should believe. I get phone calls from people who want to protect my computer from corruption. They want my money and they want to corrupt my computer. I get phone calls from people wanting to save me money by switching from our electrical provider to them as our electrical provider. Some might save us money and some may not. How do I know the difference? I won't even talk about our political candidates who tell us partial truths and add their lies.

In our text, Paul warns us that there will be **an anti-christ, also known as the beast, the son of destruction and the lawless one**. The anti-christ is a man. He will come with false miracles, signs and wonders. Yes, he will be able to do miracles. He will teach us things that are not of God. In fact he will change the center and focus of our lives from Christ to him, the world, and ourselves. He is a worldly man with worldly aims. He will seek to enrich himself. He is not to be trusted!!!

So how do we recognize this man? I ask this question because many believe we are in the end times when Christ will come again and that is the time when we

can expect to see this anti-christ arise among us. He will not be humble! Instead he will glorify himself. He will not place an emphasis upon the Word of God, but upon the words that he speaks. For example, he will distract us from the saving of souls to the feeding of the body and liberation of those caught up in the chains of cruel governments. He will distract us from feeding the soul to freeing us from sexism, racism and all the other ism's. Therefore we are encouraged by him to free the body before we are to be concerned about freeing the soul.

So what are we to do to keep ourselves aware enough to not be deceived by this anti-christ? First, we are to do our best to stay humble. We will have problems with being humble because our original sin is that we are born into this world focused upon ourselves. Therefore we live in our Savior's undeserved grace and mercy. Second, we focus upon the Word of God as the light that guides our footsteps down the path to heaven. Third, we support and encourage each other as we walk together down that path to heaven. We will find ourselves being called back to the right path and we will find ourselves calling others back to the right path. We will do this gently and we will do this based upon the direction of our God in His Word.

Some of us are spoken to by God through music. See that we choose to listen to music that when we struggle with the world will help us find God's peace and undeserved grace and mercy. Some of us are spoken to by God through visual

images. We are inspired by pictures, television, paintings, puzzles and in so many other ways. We should try to control those things we see. We can't avoid polluting our minds in this society, but we can become aware of it and replace it with Christ undeserved grace and mercy. Likewise I speak about the words and thoughts that we encounter and think about. We need to become aware of them and their focus because they can distract us from our God.

In our text, we are encouraged to stand firm in our faith and go to our God in prayer. I will add that we are to worship our God and cling to Him in song if we are gifted with the ability to sing or listen and hear God's praises. I would like to make a statement here. God did not call us to church to hear music to please our needs. God did not call us to church to be entertained. Both of these focus upon us. God called us to humble ourselves and give our glory to Him through song and drama. In fact choose leaders that glorify God and not themselves. Likewise choose churches that don't seek to become stars among the masses, but humble servants of God. Amen.