

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

Rise of Antichrist:
Do NOT be Insecure

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Introduction

Scripture states that there is a coming man of sin who will lead the world astray into a satanic false religion that will dominate the world. The Antichrist will initially look good, but then will reveal his true evil nature as he will be possessed by Satan himself.

In this last part of the chapter, Paul gives warnings and instructions in how to prepare for this period of calamity. Last week we looked at “Do Not Be Unbelieving,” today we continue our study.

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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.

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Paul's next exhortation to eliminate fear of the future is to understand the great doctrine of salvation. With a few words, the apostle sweeps the reader across the vastness of God's redemptive plan to affirm the believer's security in that plan. Paul's intent is pastoral. Those who reject the truth that believers are eternally secure cannot look forward with confident hope to Christ's coming. To believe that Christians living in unconfessed sin when the Lord returns will go to hell can only create dread and fear—especially since sinless perfection in this life is unattainable (1 Kings 8:46; Ps. 143:2; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; 1 John 1:8, 10).

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The Thessalonians did not need to fear that they had lost or could lose their salvation, because God's choice of them is irrevocable. Salvation began with God's loving choice in eternity past and will continue until glorification in the future (Rom. 8:29–30). Jesus declared that it was impossible that any of God's elect should ever be lost (John 6:37, 39–40, 44).

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That truth caused Paul to be bound to give thanks to God always for you, knowing that they were brethren beloved by the Lord. In contrast to the unredeemed, who refuse to love and obey the truth, are those who willingly do both; in contrast to those whom God judges are those He redeems; in contrast to those who believe Satan's lies are those who believe God's truth; in contrast to those who follow Antichrist are those who follow Christ.

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Paul continues to be thankful because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. God “chose us in Him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4); He “has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity” (2 Tim. 1:9).

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Salvation is only possible through the sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. Sanctification is the work of the Spirit that sets believers apart from sin to righteousness (cf. Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Peter 1:2).

The human factor in salvation is belief in the truth. Salvation is “by grace ... through faith” (Eph. 2:8). It is those who “believe in the Lord Jesus [who] will be saved” (Acts 16:31). To the Romans Paul wrote, “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:9–10).

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It was for this that **He called you through our gospel**. Salvation comes through the preaching of the gospel. It is the “Good News” that our sins can be paid for through the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! He paid for our sins in full! Jesus did it all! Our salvation is not based in who we are (we are all sinners) or what we have done (none of us are good), but in our belief in Who Jesus is, and what He accomplished accomplished on the cross.

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The **ultimate goal** of God’s redemptive plan is **for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**. It is easy for us to become focused on ourselves and wanting attention and glory to be directed towards us. This is the basis of all sin. We want what we want, when we want it. Man seeks his own purpose and pleasure.

This verse reminds us that life, both here and in eternity, focuses on giving **glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**. The multitudes in heaven will stand as an everlasting testament of the power and sacrifice of Jesus. He paid a debt He did not owe, because we had a debt we could not pay. Our salvation does not rest in our ability to keep it, but Jesus’ ability to keep us!

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Based on God's plan for His children, there was no need for the Thessalonians to be insecure about their salvation, anxious about the Lord's return, or fearful that they were in the Day of Judgment of the ungodly. They, like all believers, were not destined for judgment but for glory, for "God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9).

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So What ...

We each need to take our stands on the Truths of Scripture with regard to Salvation. We should be willing to die for "primary doctrine". However, we need to be careful and wise to be able to separate out the view and rational of man. My salvation does not rest in me being a Calvinist or having all my doctrine right, but in my belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus accused the Pharisees of teaching the doctrines of men as the doctrines of God. It is an easy thing to do. Sometimes we need to let God be God and to make sure we are doing what we are commanded. We are to go into all the world and preach the Good News of the Gospel.

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