



Spiritual Courage – Week 5

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Overview

In the fifth message of our *Fearless* series, we'll take a look at 2 Thessalonians 2.

Discussion Questions

In 2 Thessalonians, Paul addresses a false teaching that is circulating regarding the second coming of Christ. The Thessalonians began to believe they had missed Christ's return. Paul writes to encourage the church and remind them to live a life full of unshakable faith and hope in Christ's return.

Three Questions Paul Is Answering About the End Times:

1. How does the Day of the Lord relate to the End Times and to us today?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 says: “Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 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.” We can expect there to be dark times and light times as we wait for Christ's return. We are currently living in the season of light, or “Age of Grace,” beginning on Pentecost. This time period will come to an end when the Rapture of the church occurs. This is when the season of God's grace ends and a season of God's justice begins.

- How does the knowledge of living in the season of God's grace bring us peace?

2. What happens during the Tribulation?

2 Thessalonians 2:3-6 says: 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, 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. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own

time. We can clearly look around today and see that there is a resistance to the truth. But the falling away described in the Bible will be marked by the welcoming of evil and everything that is the opposite of Jesus. This is the meaning of the term Antichrist. We can see the spirit of the Antichrist at work in culture today, but the Antichrist has yet to be revealed due to the work of the Holy Spirit, God's Word, and the Church.

- How has this teaching better helped you understand the second coming of Christ and the Antichrist?
- When you see the spirit of the Antichrist at work in the world, in what ways does the Holy Spirit help you use God's Word to shine light?
- Why is the Church a force against the Antichrist?

3. What do we know about the Antichrist?

2 Thessalonians 2:7-12 says: **"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. 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. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."**

Verse 7 tells us that the Antichrist spirit is already at work here on the earth. We see this in self-centered aspects of culture, reflected in popular entertainment and media. This is no match, however, for the work God is doing on earth. As we live submitted to the Holy Spirit, our thoughts and actions will reflect His Spirit at work.

- Since the Antichrist spirit is already at work on the earth, why should we evaluate our own lives to be more honoring to God and reflect Him instead of ourselves?

Life Challenge

This week we can focus on standing firm in our faith and keeping God's teaching foremost in our minds. As you encounter discouraging news, or notice signs of the enemy at work in the world, take some time to refocus your thoughts on what God is doing through you and in your community.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for Your sacrifice for us. We know that we can choose to live from Your victory and keep our eyes on You during unsettling times. Amen. Pray for the specific needs of the group.