

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

February 5, 2006

I. The Purpose of Bible Application

We started our church a couple of years ago. We told you from the very get-go that our goal was to help everybody who became a member of our church learn the Bible. All of my life I heard the old saying, and it is a half-truth. Many times I have heard somebody tell me over the years, "If you just read your Bible, it will solve all the problems in your life." Well, that is a half-truth. I believe the answer to all a man's problems is in the Bible. There is no question about that. But I also know that just reading the Bible will not solve your problems. You have to take what you read and then apply it to your life.

Now, that is the real key, and that is what we try to do here: to show you how to take the Scriptures and apply them into your life and my life in the times that we live. If you know anything about the Bible at all, you know from our own studies and from what you know about the Bible that we are coming down to the end. We are living probably in the most exciting times, I think, personally, of any time in the history of the church, maybe outside of the time of the first coming of Christ when He came out of that tomb.

II. The Apostles' Blindness and Our Own

I have always noticed that the twelve apostles are unique individuals, and every one of them represents in their own way what Christians are like. We have talked many, many times how that out of all the twelve, there is only one that goes all the way with the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is the Apostle John. We know what he represents.

Did you ever stop and think that even John was not waiting outside that tomb at the resurrection? The greatest miracle this world has ever seen, the greatest event in the history of the world, was when that stone rolled away and Christ came out of that tomb with the keys of death and hell, and everybody on planet Earth missed it. They missed it for one reason: they missed it because deep down inside, when the terrible times came, when the apostles looked at their world being shaken, when Christ was being taken from them and crucified on the cross, they thought the end of it had come. And they really deep down, as much as they believed and as much as they wanted to believe, the Bible says everyone fled and forsook Him.

Deep down inside, there is a lot of anger, a lot of fear, a lot of misunderstanding, and all of those emotions that we fit in. Because they let the circumstances of life, because they let the Roman Empire intimidate them to such a degree, they forgot the promise of God that He would come out of that tomb. And I look at that day and age and I compare it to the time that I live in, and it is really no different. They stood there at the first coming of Christ and missed the greatest event in the history of man. We are posed right before the second coming of Christ, and we again are posed to see the greatest event that ever happened to man, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I firmly believe today that God's people, for the same reason that God's people missed Him coming out of that tomb, have missed the coming of the Lord and all of the events that go along with it. We are afraid today; we are a fearful people, and yet we are God's people. We were told that greater is He that is in us than He that is in the world. We were told that perfect love casts out fear, yet we are afraid today. We look at the Middle East; we look at the events in our own country. We cannot go to a Super Bowl or a football game without being scanned now for bombs or guns or knives or whatever. This whole world is in a panic mode, and yet the whole world has no answers.

I listened to the President's State of the Union address the other night, which probably most of you did, and everybody comes away excited and they think he has good ideas. What was it for me? All it was for me was a pep rally, somebody trying to assure me that it was going to get better when they do not have any answers how it is going to get better. I did not need to listen to his State of the Union to know what the State of the Union is. The State of the Union is in a mess. We are in a mess, and yet we have one thing that the world does not have. We have the very thing that keeps us from going over the edge as the world does, and that is the Word of God and its truth and its power. Because of that, we are supposed to be smarter. We are supposed to understand, and we are not supposed to be caught unaware with the coming of the Lord.

III. The Seven Mysteries of God

So far, as we started this study, "The Mysteries," I told you how there were seven mysteries, and I told you how throughout the Bible there is a series of sevens, which is God's way of teaching us systematic theology. He did not need Francis Schaeffer's books. He does not need to go to a Bible college to get it. You get it from the Bible that God wrote you, and He put it in there, and if you just follow it...

Somebody Thursday night asked a question. I forget who it was now. Oh, I know it was Steve. He asked the question about childlike faith and wanted to know when Jesus said, "Except you come to Me as a little child, you have no part of Me." And I told him that night, as everybody there, that that is the exact way you have to come to God to get His Bible. You have to come like a little child to the parent, simply with childlike faith, believing everything that God says in that book. There are some things in there that are hard to believe, and the more educated you get, the more you get the influence of man in your life and the world in your life, the more you do not want to believe what God simply said. For me, it has never been an issue. I believe the Bible is God's Word. I believe that when God gave man the Bible, He gave man a copy of His own mind that I might know exactly what God wants me to do.

So we have seen as we come through these, we talked about how the Bible said Paul told the church at Corinth that we are to be stewards of these mysteries.

- The mystery of God being manifested in the flesh.
- The mystery of Christ in you, the hope of glory. How Christ, who is holy, can live inside you and I, who are sinners.
- The mystery of the church, and we talked about the body mystery.

- The mystery of blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles came in. We put the whole world in perspective with that one.
- Then we talked about the rapture, how that Christ is coming for His bride.
- Last week, we talked about Babylon, the mystery religion, the mother of harlots.

Now you can begin to see how all of this begins to go together. You can see that these seven mysteries are really the seven pillars of every other teaching in the Bible as far as what God is trying to do. We have looked at six of them so far, and today we are going to look at the seventh. The seventh is really the one that caps it off. Today we are going to look at the mystery of iniquity, and we are going to take a study through the Bible of the Antichrist.

IV. The Mystery of Iniquity: The Antichrist's Deception

If you have your Bibles this morning, this final mystery is found in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. I want to read 12 verses. We are going to do a lot of reading today as we go through this, so you just have to bear with me.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Let us pray. Now Father, we thank You and praise You today. Lord, I have nothing of any value to say today. All the years that I have spent coming through Your Bible are worthless without the Holy Spirit of God leading and guiding me into truth as You show us together. I am not any better than anybody in this room. The fact that I am a pastor in this church makes me no better than anybody else. It is just the office that I hold. It is my responsibility to teach and to preach. But I am not a hierarchy. I am not higher than them. I am not better than them. We are all in the same trench together, fighting these last moments of these last days before Jesus comes back.

Lord, let us take this time and set it aside with all the busyness that we have got today, with all the other things in our life and our week. Let us take these next few moments and just focus seriously on where we are at in our relationship with You. Father, I pray that You will lead and guide us into all truth today. And when it is all said and done, Father, we will give You the honor and the glory and the praise. We will thank You now and we will praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

This mystery found here is called the mystery of iniquity, and it simply deals with the person of the Antichrist. This chapter, 2 Thessalonians 2, is one of your key chapters in the Bible. I told you before that in the Old Testament, the two greatest chapters on the person of Satan and Antichrist are Job 40 and Job 41. The two greatest chapters in the New Testament, and we are going to get into those this morning a little bit later on, will be Revelation 12 and Revelation 13. This passage goes along with that and begins to tell us that this last mystery that we are going to look at is the mystery of iniquity.

There are some things that we can learn, and we do not have time to get into all of this because we have a lot of material, and I am picking and choosing as we go through this, but I want to highlight some of the things that you need to understand. The first thing it says in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 is, "Let no man deceive you."

I am going to tell you, and we talked about this last week when we talked about the religion, the church, and the Bible of the devil and the Antichrist. We know now where his church is. We know where it was in the Old Testament. We know where it was in the New Testament. We know that the way he operates is by deception, by counterfeit, and by imitation. So the first thing that Paul tells the church at Thessalonica is not to be deceived. I tell you, do not let anybody deceive you. When you get deceived, you will be disarmed. And when you get disarmed, you will become discouraged. God's people are living in a time and a day and age where we do not need to be disarmed. We need to be armed to the teeth with the Word of God and the Spirit of God that we stand in these last days.

The next thing I want you to see is 2 Thessalonians 2:4, where it says that when the Antichrist comes, when the devil comes in the person of the Antichrist, that he is going to oppose himself and exalt himself above all that is called God, and all that is worshiped. He is going to show himself to be God, and he is going to sit down in the temple in Jerusalem and show himself to be God.

Here is how it works. We know that the Tribulation period runs seven years. We know that when the Antichrist comes, and this is a passage that talks about the revealing of it, we are going to get into details in a little bit. We know that when he shows up right after the Rapture of the Church, the Antichrist for the first half of the Tribulation period brings in peace and safety. He brings a false security to this world. In the middle of that week, in the middle of that seven years, at the three-and-a-half-year mark, this is where he turns on the nation of Israel. This is where it says in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that he goes into the temple in Jerusalem, and he sits down in that temple, and that is the same Millennial temple that Christ will sit in in the Millennial reign of Christ. He goes into that temple, and he sits down and he claims to be God, and he demands all of the world to worship him.

That is the main goal of the devil: he wants to be God. All the way back in Isaiah 14, all the way back in Ezekiel 28, way before anything ever got started, the devil said in his heart, "I will be like the Most High God." He wants to be God. That is his issue. And his Tribulation period, his seven years, really his three and a half years, is his "fifteen minutes of fame," as we say. That is where he gets the opportunity, and he tries to take the world and keep Christ with the armies and the population of this world, keeps Christ from coming back. Fat chance, but he tries it anyhow. So we begin to see that in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, his main goal is to be God.

2 Thessalonians 2:5-7 is Paul writing this. He is telling us that this plan in the New Testament, the devil's plan, is already underway. It is already underway. "The mystery of iniquity does already work." 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 tells us as soon as the rapture takes place—we have studied that already, that is us being taken out, the Church, the body of Christ, the same believers. As soon as the rapture takes place, the Antichrist shows up, and 2 Thessalonians 2:10 says he shows up with "all deceivableness of unrighteousness."

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 says:

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 are two of the greatest verses in all of the Bible that simply tell you if you miss the rapture, you are in trouble. It is none of this stuff that you read in the Christian books that are out, that you miss the rapture and you say, "Oops, I will pick it up on the other side." No, no, no. The Bible says that the body of Christ, the Church, if you have heard the Gospel—so if you are here this morning, I would head out of here right now if you do not want to hear it. If you have heard the Gospel, if you have heard the clear, plain teaching of Christ, if you have, as the Bible says, "held the truth of God in your unrighteousness," if you have kept the Word of God, heard the Word of God, and went your own way and said, "I do not believe the Bible, I do not care about religion, I do not care about God and the Bible and Church, I do not need that." If you have held those things in unrighteousness, when the rapture comes, the Bible says God Himself is going to send you a strong delusion for the purpose that you believe a lie,

that you might be damned because you have the truth right now and you did not do anything with it. I do not know how to make it any stronger than that. I do not know how to warn you any other way than that. We are living in the last days. We are living in the last hours of the last days. When you come down through this, you begin to see how the devil is already at work through counterfeit, through imitation, and through deception.

V. Two Seed Lines in Scripture

I told you last week the Bible in its most simple form is built around two men: God and the devil. Those two men represent two biblical concepts. One represents light, the other one represents darkness. One represents right, the other one represents wrong. One represents righteousness, the other one represents unrighteousness. One represents heaven, the other represents hell. Not only do they represent two concepts, but I want you to know that they represent two lines in the Bible. Two lines. When I say lines, I mean lines of people. The Bible is built around two men, and throughout the Bible in its simplest form, the Bible is nothing more than tracing those two lines through the Bible.

The first prophecy you find about these two lines in the Bible is all the way back in Genesis 3:15, where God makes a prophecy and He says to Adam and Eve, and the Lord God said unto the serpent, "Because thou hast done this, destroyed Adam and Eve, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Then He says this in Genesis 3:15, the first prophecy in the Bible on the two seeds:

Genesis 3:15

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The Bible says that He is going to put enmity between two seeds. Let me just say, the woman's seed here is the Lord Jesus Christ. That seed from Eve comes down through the line. You can trace it through the genealogies, and as Eve brings that seed down, it comes through Seth, it comes through Shem, it comes through Abraham, it comes through David, it comes through Solomon, it comes right down the kingly line, and it comes manifest in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ at the first coming of Christ. The devil's seed is also manifest in the Old Testament.

You are going to find that there are two lines in your Bible. Two lines. It is so simple. I do not know why man makes the Bible so hard. If you can just remember a couple of basic things about the Bible, it will begin to unlock itself to you. The Bible is about two men. The Bible is about two places. The Bible is about two things: light and darkness, heaven and hell, God and the devil. It is so simple. And in the Bible, there are two lines. You are either following this line or you are following that line. It is not any harder than that. Man likes to make it more complicated than it is. But the Bible says in Genesis 3 that there are two lines. There is the serpent line, and then there is the seed of the woman. The Bible says there is enmity between those two lines. Do you know what enmity means? It means they do not get along. Enmity means a deep-rooted hatred.

These lines are not hard to see. They are not hard to see at all. And the Bible is simply a record of those two seed lines through the Bible: the devil's line and God's line.

Last week we saw the devil's religion in the Old Testament. We know how that in the Old Testament the devil's religion was Baal worship, and how it manifested itself into the Roman church in the New Testament. We have seen that now very clearly, and we know how it works. Now this line is real easy in your Bible. I will tell you why: because God did not write a book that is hard to believe. This is one of the things that this is the major thing we are going to do when we put our "How to Study the Bible" concept together. When you folks who want to learn the Bible, when we get together and we launch this plan, this is how we are going to approach it. We are going to approach it as easy as it really is, not as hard as it appears. We are not going to take it from a man's standard. We are going to take it from God's standard. And I am going to show you how this thing works. We are going to break it down the most simplistic, easy way for you to learn the Word of God.

This line is real easy. In your Bible, here is what God has done: He has traced those lines for you. In your Bible, you are going to find 18 men. They start in Genesis and they wind up at the first coming of Christ. Eighteen men who are going to foreshadow the Antichrist. We call them in Bible study, men who are types of the Antichrist. Eighteen men. Somebody said, "Why did God give us 18 men who show us the line of Satan?" Because Satan's number is 666, and three times six is 18. That is why you have it. And there are 18 men in your Old Testament that bring you through and show you this line. This line sometimes is spiritual. This line is sometimes physical.

Do you know where it starts? It starts with Cain all the way back. The Bible says in 1 John 3:12, "Cain was of that wicked one." What did Cain do? He killed his brother. He killed Abel. What does the Bible say in John 8:44? It says, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning." Where is that? Cain and Abel. So there is something about Cain. From Cain starts the Satan seed. From Cain starts the line. You are going to find that the two lines start with Cain. You should not be surprised at that.

Have you ever studied Cain and Abel? Here is Abel over here and here is Cain. The Bible says that there came a day that they were going to bring a sacrifice to the Lord. So the Bible says that Abel went down and he was a keeper of the sheep. So he went down and he took the firstling of the flock. That means he took a lamb. And he took that lamb and he killed that lamb and he offered it up a sacrifice to God. Now Cain, he was not a keeper of the sheep. He was a farmer, and he was a good farmer. He raised watermelons. He really liked watermelons. He raised watermelons and he raised apples and he raised corn and he raised everything in the world. He had the best fruits and vegetables anybody in all around. And the Bible says that Cain, when he brought this offering to the Lord, he brought the fruit of his hands. He brought some carrots and some lettuce and some watermelon and he brought some apples and some oranges and he laid that thing down there before the Lord. And Abel on the other hand, he went out, took a lamb, killed that lamb and brought a sacrifice, something dying that was innocent, the shedding of the blood. And the Bible says that God had respect unto Abel's and He rejected Cain's.

That did not go over well with Cain. Cain was upset. So the Lord comes down that day and He is checking things out and Cain is over here pouting in the corner, sucking his thumb. God walks over and says, "How are you doing, Cain?" Cain did not answer Him. He says, "I am having a bad day today," and he said, "I do not want to talk about it." He says, "Oh, come on, let me hear you say, 'Praise the Lord.' Have you got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in your heart, Cain?" Cain was having a bad day. Then the Lord says, "Hey Cain, why has thy countenance fallen? What is the matter?" Do you know what Cain told Him? He told Him, "I am mad because You did not accept my sacrifice." Do you know what God said? Now this shows you how good God is. He already brought the wrong sacrifice and God did not accept it. Do you know what God told him? God told him, "Cain, what is the problem, son? If you go get the right sacrifice, I will accept it." Now what better deal can you get than that? I mean, he brought the wrong one. God did not whack him for that. God did not accept it. And then when he comes up and he says, "Why?" God said, "Hey, if you go get the right sacrifice, I will take it." And the first thing you see in Cain is an attitude problem. You see a man who wants to do it his way.

In a spiritual aspect, Cain and Abel represent two kinds of people we have in the world today. There is the one who brings the lamb and comes to Christ, the other one that says, "No, no, my good works will get me to heaven." I will tell you what, if you ever talk to a do-gooder, that is somebody that thinks that doing good works will get to heaven, and you ever try to tell them about the blood of Christ, you watch how angry they get, just like Cain did. Cain is the first man in the Bible. He is the first man in the Bible that starts that seed. And from that seed, we start to find Cain. The Bible says that Cain leaves the presence of the Lord. He goes his own way. We studied it last week. It is with Cain that you start to find men, his descendants, putting the word "Baal" at the end of their name: Jubal, Tubal-Cain. Baal, the sun god, starts coming in at the end of their names. And you find that starting in Cain's line.

So Cain begins that line.

- Cain (Genesis 4)
- Nimrod (Genesis 10)
- Pharaoh (Exodus 1-12)
- Balak (Numbers)
- Sisera (Judges)
- Abimelech (Judges 9)
- Saul (1 Samuel)
- Goliath (1 Samuel)

You remember Goliath, do you not? Goliath was the big giant, the Philistine. And you know the story. Every kid in Sunday school knows the story of David and Goliath. Goliath was about 18 feet tall. David was just a little 15, 16-year-old kid. You read the story back there, and the story is, you know, you can kill a giant and all that. I know that. But what that is is a picture of the second coming of Christ, you see? Goliath was a giant. He is a type of the Antichrist. David is one of your great types of Christ in the Bible. Do you know where they are fighting? They are fighting in a valley. Do you know what valley it is? It is the same valley they are going to fight the battle of Armageddon, about 4,000 years from that point. And it is the same system.

David goes down there, and Goliath comes out with all of his armor on. He has everything on. He has everything that he needs. He has a breastplate. He has greaves. He has a sword. He has a spear. He has everything he needs. And David does not have anything except God. When a giant comes out, clinking and clanking with all of his armor on, David is down there. He looked like he was probably 120 pounds soaking wet. Do you know what he does? He has a slingshot. And he goes over there and he picks up five smooth stones out of that brook. Do you know why it is stones? Because in Daniel 2, in the book of Daniel, when the second coming of Christ, Jesus Christ is called the great smiting stone. That is why. Do you know why he picked up five? I heard a guy say one time, "Well, David was a great man of God, but David really did not trust God because if he was really trusting God, he would have just picked up one stone." He did not read his Bible very well. My Bible tells me that David had four brothers. David says, "If you want to make this a family affair, we will go five for five." That is why he took five. He did not need them because once the other big brother saw the big brother go down, they were headed east, not west.

Old David walks out there. When he comes out, the giant says, "Oh, oh, oh," and he is going to wipe him out. David says, "I come out to you in the name of the Lord." He had the power of God. And he put that old sling in there, and I can just see it. He is swinging that thing around, man, swinging that thing around. God says, "Okay, you can stop swinging that, David. It went about a minute ago," and that thing went out. Do you know where it hit the giant? It hit him right between the eyes. Do you know why it killed him between the eyes? Because the Bible says you have to have the helmet of salvation. Goliath did not have the helmet of salvation. I will tell you the other reason why it hit him right between the eyes and the head: because the Antichrist gets a head wound somewhere in the Tribulation period. He is a type. He is a picture. It is all through the Bible. That seed, you can trace it all the way through.

- Absalom (2 Samuel)
- Nabal (1 Samuel)
- Jeroboam
- Ahab and Jezebel (Revelation 2:20, 1 Kings 16)
- Endor
- Nebuchadnezzar
- Sennacherib
- Haman (Esther)
- Herod
- Judas (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

Herod is the type of the Antichrist that when Christ was born, he had all the babies killed so he could try to get rid of Christ. The last type of the Antichrist in your Bible is Judas. He is the key. There are only two men in your Bible called the Son of Perdition. One of them is the Antichrist; the other one is Judas himself. And there lies the connection. So you find that the serpent seed is laid out through the whole Bible. You could not miss it if you wanted to.

Just as there are 18 types of the Antichrist, there are 21 types of Christ in your Bible. And they represent the seed of the woman. In this line will be the line of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Adam
- Abel
- Shem
- Noah
- Moses
- Aaron
- Joshua
- Jacob
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Melchizedek
- David
- Elijah
- Elisha
- Solomon

Now Solomon is interesting. We do not have time to get into this. Solomon is the only man in your Bible that is both a type of Christ and a type of the Antichrist at the same time. It is one of the most fantastic studies. Another good question for Thursday night. We do not have time to get into today.

- Joseph
- Jonah
- Gideon
- Samuel
- Barak
- Hezekiah

You are going to find that you have now two lines in your Bible. You have the seed of the woman, and you have the seed of Satan, the serpent. And those two lines are so clear. All of your Bible is divided on those two lines. One line represents a religion, Judaism, given to the nation of Israel. The other line represents the devil's religion, Baal worship in the Old Testament, the Roman church in the New Testament. And you will find everything divided right down those lines in the Old Testament.

Just like you have two lines in the Old Testament, friends, you have two lines in the New Testament. Do you know what the problem is with God's people today? We have no discernment. We have no discernment. We are not able to rightly divide the Word of Truth. The two missing elements in the body of Christ today are that we do not have any understanding and we do not have discernment. We cannot look at things in our world today and discern them from the Bible. We see them, but we do not understand. We look at the Middle East right now, and all we see is a conglomeration of nations over there that all are against Israel. But because we lack understanding and discernment, we do not see how God figures into that thing over there. When you see by discernment and understanding what you have got, then you know where you are at. And it is that way with all the world.

I said last week, the reason why people ask me all the time, "How come there are so many churches? How come there are so many people who believe different things?" I am not saying the Baptist church is the only true church. Let me tell you something. Believe me. I was telling the group the other day, we call ourselves Baptist. But sometimes I feel we have to be called... I have been asked, I have been in a group before when the guy says, "Well, what kind of church do you pastor?" He says, "Well, I am a Lutheran or a Methodist or Presbyterian, or I am a Baptist," and this guy is a Baptist, and they will come around to me and say, "What kind of church?" And I said, "I am a Baptist with explanation." Because there are some weird Baptists out there.

I told the group yesterday, I saw in the news this week, it was the most terrible thing I ever saw in my life. This group down here that pickets funerals, when they go out there and they hold up signs that your son, because he died in Iraq, died in the war, he died and he burned in hell because he is an unholy ward. They actually go to funerals of soldiers that were killed, and they picket outside the funeral homes and then outside at the cemetery, while taps is blowing over a brave young man who gave his life in the defense of this country, they are out there with their signs saying God is going to send this boy to hell because he is fighting Bush's war. Now, whether you like Bush or not is immaterial. I do not like anybody in the world of politics. Anything else, I am suspect of. But whether what is your politics or let me tell you something. We would all be speaking either Japanese or German today if there were not about 250,000 American boys that gave their life on the beaches of Normandy, Saipan, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Now you can cut that any way you want it, but if it is not that, it is "Shig-Hai-O" or "Guess I'm on, guess I'm on, guess I'm on," one or the other, you can take your pick. Is that good Japanese? Give me a good Japanese saying. "Ohio." Ohio what? "Ohio Zynomos?" Ohio is, no, it is a state, I am from Ohio. Give me, real loud, give me a Japanese, give me "Banzai" or something. Oh, I like, "Banzai?" Yeah, give me a big "Banzai." "Banzai!" Whoo. It is gold. The only Japanese proverb I know is this one: "If five million people believe a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing."

I do not know where I was, but I needed that "Banzai" to keep me going for the rest of this. That is the missing element. We do not understand, we cannot discern, we cannot see things the way they are. I am telling you, and you have heard me say this before, I absolutely believe this. I am a Baptist, but I am a Baptist with an explanation. I will tell you what, I see, I am not just picking, I mean I think the whole world is nuts. The Christian world, I mean we already know the unsaved world is nuts. I would never take "Baptist" out of our name. I really would not because it is a catch-22, because I know traditionally what Baptists stand for. I know the first Baptist church in America was started by a Baptist who was connected with Waldensians. I know the Waldensians are connected with the Huguenots, the Albigensians, and the true biblical line that goes down through the history of the church. So I am not about to take it out because when you take it out, then you lump yourself with the other crowd that has no Baptist distinctions and no Bible doctrine at all, and I am not going to do that. So I have to make the explanation every once in a while. I am a Baptist, but I am a Bible-believing Baptist from the Waldensian stock of the Albigensian, the Huguenots, Count Zinzendorf, the Moravian missionaries, the Holland Baptist, the Dutch Baptist, the English Baptist, right back to Acts 11 when they first called Christians in Antioch. That is where I am at.

I believe the Bible is the final authority. I believe it has the answers to everything that man's problem is, and I believe it. No, I have never been to Bible college. I do not plan on going. No, I do not know Greek and Hebrew. I do not have time to learn it. No, I do not believe in all the higher criticism Bible. I am just dumb. I just believe that God wrote a book for every common man. Would you like it for me to get up here and speak down to you? Would you like me to speak condescendingly? I can. I know all the words. I can talk to you about all angelology, eschatology. I can talk about pneumatology. I can just lay it out. I can go on and on and on, and you will walk out of here and you will be driving home with your wife and you will say, "Man, did he have some things, words to say today," and she would, "Yeah," and you both look at the other and say, "But what did they mean?" What good is it? When did Jesus ever get on the crowd with a hill with the feeding of 5,000 and say, "Alright boys, today we are going to talk about eschatology and angelology"? No, He said, "You know what? You see the cloud, you see the air, you see the sky, you see the trees," things in the Bible like that. And then He talked to them. He laid it out plain. Do you know why? Because the book is plain. It is the devil that wants to take it from you. That is why his religion for 1,500 years made it a capital offense for you to own or read a Bible. They wanted to keep you out of it. Me, I want to get you in it. They will kill you if you read it. I would like to kill you because you do not. So I have to make that explanation when I start. I do not want to ever get the designation, "Why he just picks on it." Hey, I will pick on anybody who does not believe that book to show you the difference. If you get mad at me, that is your problem. At the judgment seat of Christ, I can be your best friend or your worst enemy. And I am going to tell you the truth. I do not care. It is the way it is. There are two systems.

When you have understanding and discernment in the Old Testament, you follow that line. That line is Satan's line. It is his seed. And it brings you right down and then goes right into the New Testament and brings you up to 2006 right now, Super Bowl Sunday. He is working on you. And then you have the other line. The other line starts back there with Cain and Abel, and it starts with Abel and it runs right down through the Old Testament through those 21 types. It comes right up there and it ends at the second coming of Christ. I am telling you, it is just as simple as that. The only way you see it, the only way you keep from getting deceived, the only way you keep from getting caught up in it is to get understanding and discernment. My job in its basic bottom line, lowest common denominator form, my job is to give you understanding and discernment. Not because I have got it, because the book has it.

VI. Revelation 12: The Dragon and the Woman

With that in mind, take your Bibles and turn to Revelation 12. We are going to read these two chapters in their entirety because these are the two greatest chapters in the New Testament that have the greatest information on what we are studying in all the New Testament. I told you earlier, Job 40 and Job 41 are in the Old Testament. But here it is. I am going to break these two chapters down for you. We are going to put them to work and we are going to see how they fit into where we are going.

(Audience interaction)

Revelation 12:1-17

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I am going to stop and pause as we come through here and tell you what these are. The woman is the nation of Israel, not Mary. It is the nation of Israel. The twelve stars are the twelve tribes and the twelve nations of Israel. "And she being with child cried, travailing in birth and pained to be delivered." What you have here is a picture of the first coming of Christ. The woman Israel being pained to be delivered, typified by a woman in the child that she is going to deliver, obviously is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now watch. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon, Satan, having seven heads and ten horns." Those are the nations that he is running the world by. "Seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. And his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven." Those are the angels that left with him when he revolted back in Genesis 1. "And did cast them to the earth, and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered for her to devour her child as soon as it was born." That there is Herod, at the first coming of Christ, who the devil through Herod, a type of the Antichrist, is standing ready to devour the Christ child by having all the babies killed. This is what you have got. This is the Bible 101 made real easy. Notice I have not gone to the Greek or Hebrew yet. And I probably will not. So we get the "pharmakeia" and then I will need to use that one.

"And she brought forth a man child, Christ, who was to rule all nations, millennium, with a rod of iron, millennium, and her child was caught up into God and to His throne, the ascension." "And the woman fled." Notice it skipped right over the church age, goes right into the Tribulation because we are not dealing with the church age. The church is gone. This is all to Israel. So we go from the first coming of Christ, right smack dab into the Tribulation of Revelation 12:6. "And the woman, Israel, fled into the wilderness where she had the place prepared of God that they should feed her 1,260 days." That is three and a half years. That is the last half of the Tribulation period.

Now watch. "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought with his angels and prevailed not. Neither was their place found anymore in heaven." "And the great dragon, definition, was cast out, that old serpent."

Revelation 12:9

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now has come salvation and strength, the kingdom of our Christ, of our God, and the power of His Christ.'" Now notice that. See that thing? "His Christ, His Christ, His Christ." Do you know why that is? Because there are two Christs in your Bible. There is the Lord's Christ, and there is the Antichrist. So the Bible makes a distinction. Do you know what the word "Christ" means? It means anointed. Christ, the Lord's Christ, Jesus Christ, is God's anointed. But the devil, before he fell, was the anointed cherub that covered the throne. He is anointed. So there are two Christs in the Bible. One of them is the Christ and the

Antichrist. And discernment tells you which one is where, when. You need to know that. You will learn those things in time.

"For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and to the sea. For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." If you have your wide margin, you want to put 2 Thessalonians 2:8 right there at Revelation 12:12. That short time marks the middle of the Tribulation period. He is coming down. This is where he is revealed, 2 Thessalonians 2:8. And now he only has three and a half years left.

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast into the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the child, Israel. And the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness, unto a place where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time, three and a half years, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." That would be the flood of Daniel 9:26, if you are paying attention. "The earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." See that thing? There is her seed. That "her seed" is the seed of the woman. Her seed. "Which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Your whole Bible is around those two seeds. You can trace those two seeds all the way through the Old Testament, up through the New Testament, and from the end of the New Testament, right up to where we are living. I do not care if it is 500 AD, 900 AD, 1500 AD, 2006 AD. The lines are as clear today as they were in the Old Testament, without any question about it. And it is just as clear. What is lacking is the discernment, and the understanding, and the ability to see it.

Here is what we have learned from Revelation 12: the devil's hatred for the nation of Israel. We have seen how the devil hates the nation of Israel, and how he knows the reason why he hates Israel is twofold:

1. He hates Israel because Israel brought forth the Lord Jesus Christ who was the rightful heir to the throne.
2. Israel is going to get the land that was promised to Abraham, what we call Palestine today, and that is why the devil today has his nations bracketing Israel at every turn in the Middle East. All of Iraq and Iran, and Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, and all of the rest of those are nothing more than the Amalekites, the Hittites, the Danites, the Jebusites, and all of those groups back in the Old Testament.

I told you last week that on May 12, 1948, when Israel signed their independence, and they broke, and they signed themselves up as a nation, immediately they were attacked by the Arab League. Those Arab League were made up of the seven nations, and they are the same seven nations that Joshua faced when he went across Jordan into the land of Palestine in 1400 BC.

Nothing changes. The lines are the same. When you see the lines, you understand the lines, you know where you are at in history.

Then so he goes down through there when he talks about how that Satan enters into the Antichrist, and he is cast out, and he says, "Woe to the earth, woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down unto you having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short space." So in the middle of the Tribulation period, the devil is kicked out of heaven. He comes down, he enters into the Antichrist, who was a real person of the line of Satan, just like the devil entered into Judas when he was ready to betray Christ. The Bible says Judas was a devil, and the devil entered into him at that moment when he betrayed Christ. Just as the devil entered into Judas, a devil, the Bible says that the devil is going to enter into the Antichrist in the middle of that Tribulation for the purpose of stopping Christ's seed and taking over the world. And this is where he goes into Jerusalem. The temple is rebuilt. He sits down in the temple, and he demands all the world to worship him, and they have to take his mark, his name, or his number, and his number is 666.

VII. Revelation 13: The Beast and the False Trinity

Revelation 12 brings you up to the fact where he is kicked out, and it says, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth." Revelation 13, here he is. He shows up.

Revelation 13:1-18

1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given him to continue forty and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea and saw a great beast, here he comes, rise out of the sea." That sea would be the Mediterranean Sea, telling you that the area here is going to be the Middle East. "Having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his ten horns ten crowns, upon his head, the name of blasphemy." The ten horns and the crowns will be the nations. They are found in Psalms 83, if you want to look them up. The nations by which he runs this world. "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth was the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and his great authority. And I saw one of his heads were wounded to death." There is the head wound, just like I told you with Goliath. In fact, many of the types of the Antichrist in the Old Testament wound up getting hung like Judas. "I saw one of his heads were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon which gave him the power unto the beast, the devil, and worshiped the beast saying, 'Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?'"

You see, he has got the whole world believing that he is God. And the whole world is looking at him sitting on the throne. I do not know if you saw it or not, but last week, one night, they had a thing on the Discovery Channel that talked about the rapture of the church. I do not know if anybody saw it or not. It was incredible. And it was called "The Left Behind Crowd." And it was

an examination of all the books that are coming out now talking about the rapture. What they did for 90 minutes was show you how nobody of any credibility believes in a rapture. What they did for 90 minutes was destroy and tell you that only hillbilly cultists believe that Christ is coming back and taking everybody off the Earth. What they did for 90 minutes is take the Bible apart, make fun of it, and tell everybody in this room that if you believe the doctrine of the rapture of the church, do you? Well, maybe you all sided with that. Do you? If you believe that he is coming back and taking you out, you are in the minority. It is a cult, and you are somebody who just came up with that on your own because the mainstream religion, that is, the devil's church, does not teach that.

I am telling you, I know you do not know these things because some of you just do not pay attention to it. But it is out there every day, all day, everything to discredit. Why? Because when he comes, somebody asks me, "Well, how is the devil going to explain away the rapture?" If nobody believes in a rapture, he is not going to have to explain anything. And what is going to happen is that when he comes back and this thing, the whole world, the whole world, and you know what they said? One guy, one great theologian from a Boston Theological Seminary said this. He says, "How absurd is it to believe that you have to have some kind of holy righteousness before God will come back, that man himself cannot bring that in?" That is exactly what amillennialism and postmillennialism say. And that is exactly what is going to happen. When the Antichrist shows up, he is going to say, "All you people who did all the good things, who did all the good works, who sent all the money down and helped everybody around the world, you are good people. Now, I am back. God is back. We got rid of those hillbilly fanatics. And now everything is going to be great. Here I am. Worship me." Boy, they are going to go.

The reason why God's people do not know that is because God's people do not study their Bibles anymore. They do not go to churches that teach the Bible anymore. I dare simply say, not because of me. I am not the doer. I am probably the worst preacher in the world, but you could not find a church in this city that is preaching that message that I am giving you this morning or anyone like I give you. Do you know why? Because they do not want to rock the boat. Their incomes depend on it. Well, my income does not depend on what I preach, but my outcome with the judgment seat of Christ does. Oh, I like that. "Income," but I want to write that down. I want to use that again. I love it when God gives me something like that that I did not plan. But my problem is I forget it if somebody does not write it down. Did you not think it was good? You got it. I do not take orders from punks. That is a private joke. My income does not depend on it, but my outcome does at the judgment seat of Christ. I do not care. I am going to preach the truth. If you all get mad and leave, it is okay with me. I know I will have five people here next week. I am watching you. Oh, yeah. You should put a chair between you. Bring a phone book and put it between you. I hear that.

I am telling you, it is the truth. It is the truth. And when he shows up, the whole world is going to believe it. He deceives them that dwell on the Earth by the means of the miracles. The deadly wound is healed, and he comes down through here, and it talks about Revelation 13:14, "And he deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles, which he had the power to

do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image unto the beast."

Now, look at that. I do not know if you followed this along or not. I told you that the devil imitates, he counterfeits, and he deceives. So when the devil shows up in the person of the Antichrist, if he is going to pull this great deception off, he knows that the basic fundamental teaching of everybody on planet Earth is that God is a Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. So watch, watch, watch.

- In Revelation 13:4, you have the beast. That is the false Father.
- In Revelation 13:11, you have the false prophet. That is the false Holy Spirit.
- In Revelation 13:14, you have the image. That is the false God the Son.

He has a counterfeit, unholy Trinity, just like God has the Holy Trinity. And he deceives this world with an unholy, ungodly Trinity of God the Father, the Antichrist or the beast, the false prophet, the false Holy Spirit. And then just as Jesus Christ was the image of God, he has an image that is made in the image of the Antichrist that everybody worships his Son through him. And the whole world will buy it just like that. And his number is 666. Of course, there are only three places in your Bible that you find the number 666. One of them is here in Revelation 13:16. And then you find it in 1 Kings 10 and you find Ezra 2. Let me tell you something, there is a study there. That is another Thursday night question.

Revelation 13:14 says, "That they should make an image of the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as they should not worship the beast should be killed." There it is. You see, things do not change. Satan's church down through all through the centuries. If you did not worship what they said was God, they killed you. Do you know how many Anabaptists and Paulicians and Lombards and Cathari and Huguenots were butchered and killed through the Dark Ages by the Inquisition because of the fact that they would not believe that Rome was God and their God was God? They killed them by the millions, by the hundreds of thousands. Nothing has changed in the Tribulation period. If the nation of Israel and all the people on the Earth do not bow down, they get killed.

Revelation 13:15 says, "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

Revelation 13:16-18

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

It is coming a day when the Antichrist sits in that temple and he claims himself to be God and he shows himself to be God that everybody on Earth is going to bow down and worship him and take his mark. Revelation 12, 13, and 14 is the third time in the book of Revelation that you come through the Tribulation period, and it ends in Revelation 17 and 18 where we ended last week with the destruction of Babylon the Great, and all of these chapters go together.

VIII. Discernment in the Last Days

The mystery of iniquity, the rise of the Antichrist, who the Antichrist is, the two lines coming through the Bible lining up and showing you the second coming of Christ, they are all moving toward a day in your Bible that is the key day, and that is the day of the battle, the great battle of Armageddon, when God defeats the devil, when light triumphs over darkness, when good triumphs over evil, when the Lord Jesus Christ takes and banishes Satan and all the dark cohorts with him for all of eternity. It brings you the third time through.

I told you many times that the theme of the Bible is nothing more than a kingdom with a crown associated with a kingdom. Another simple aspect of your Bible is simply that you have down here a kingdom and a crown, and you have two men represented by two lines, represented by two churches, represented by two Bibles, represented by two schools of thought, represented by two concepts. One of them rightly deserves it because he is the Lord's Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ. The other one does not deserve it because he is the Antichrist, and he is against everything that God is. One of them wants to dethrone God; the other one wants to give honor and glory to God. And everybody in this room is on one side or the other this morning. Life is not tough, not hard at all. Man likes to make it hard, but it is not.

Today the mystery of iniquity has been working now for 6,000 years. When Paul wrote that book back there in 2 Thessalonians, he writes that in probably 54, 55 A.D. And when he is writing those things, he says, "The mystery of iniquity does already work." The devil wants Palestine, he wants Jerusalem, so you are going to find all history directly and indirectly is on those two lines. Everything in world history is going to be on those two lines. Every nation is going to be on one line or the other. Everything in this world is going to fall down on one line of the seed or the other line of the seed. Do not ever let education confuse you from the simplicity of God's Word in the Bible. Everything in this life, every nation, all history, everything on this planet that was designed by God for the purpose of fulfilling God's mission and God's plan will come down on one line or the other, either God's seed or the devil's seed. And they are in opposition all the way through.

There is only one thing right now that is keeping the Antichrist from taking over. Do you know what it is? It is you and me, the church. God has always had His faithful few. When you go back there and we talked about it last week how Israel was in such a bad way that the whole nation of Israel had gone after Baal worship, that you could not find anybody that was doing what is right. And it looked like it was so black and it was so bleak. And you find the great prophets and their struggle because the people hate everything that comes out of their mouth because it is seemingly everything they say is negative because Israel is negative. And Elijah, he is back there and he is feeling all by himself. And God says to him back there in 2 Kings, He says, "Elijah, do

not despair. I have got 7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." The great thing about God is I do not care how black it gets. I do not care how the devil tries or appears to take it over. It is only an appearance. The devil always manipulates, the devil always takes advantage of our fears. And the devil will always give the impression that he is winning when he is not. The bottom line is I know how the outcome is. I read the end of the book. We win in the end. And that is my victory.

I look at those things and I see those things and I realize that any place down through the Bible, everywhere, in the darkest, blackest times, when it looked like there was not a sliver of life. In the Old Testament, when you had the Baal worshipers that were persecuting and killing everybody, there were men and women that stayed true to God. There were not many, but they stayed faithful. And out of all Israel of maybe five or six million people, 7,000 men stayed true to God because that line will always be there. Many times in history that serpent's line will overshadow God's line. Many times it looks like it obliterates God's line. Many times it looks like that down through history, God is nowhere to be found. That evil has taken completely over like in America today. But I have some news for you: down in the Dark Ages when the Roman church was suppressing the Word of God, killing millions of Christians, wiping them out by the hundreds of thousands, it was those little guys that you do not read about in history books. The little men and women on every street corner that were telling the story of Christ and furthering the kingdom by preaching the Word of God under the punishment of capital death.

I am going to tell you something today. I do not care how black it looks. I do not care how bleak it looks. I do not care if every church in this city and every church in this country turns their back on the Word of God and plays their little games with God. Let me tell you something. God's commission is today, and there are men and women still alive today who believe that book, who stand true in that book, who understand that God has a plan. In these last days, we are sitting on the 50-yard line of the greatest show in the history of the world. We are on the 50-yard line; we have front-row seats of the greatest battle that this world has ever known. The only other time in history that it was the greatest show on Earth was that day. I mean, if I would have been one of the apostles, I cannot speak for what I did not know or what I know, but I hope I, if I would have believed Him all the way, I would have been sat down there six inches in front of that rock in that tomb looking at my watch. And brother, I would have waited and I would have waited and I would have waited, and one of these times, brother, it would have happened. That old rock would have rolled away, and out He would have come, brother, with the keys of death and hell, and I would have woken up everybody in the city and told them. Nobody was there because the very best of God's people, the very best of God's people can be intimidated and not believe in the truth all the way to the end. Do not miss it.

This is why Paul says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren." He does not want us to be ignorant of the fact that Christ is coming. He does not want us to be ignorant of the fact that the mystery of iniquity does already work. It is already laid out for you. If you just let me help you learn the Bible, get some discernment and understanding. You too can watch the six o'clock news, the ten o'clock news, The O'Reilly Factor, Rush Limbaugh, Hannity and Colmes. You can

watch everything, read everything, and know exactly what perspective it goes into in your life in 2006 right before the Lord comes back.

I am telling you, the mystery of iniquity has already worked. It has been working a long time, and it is almost come to the place where it is ready. The only thing that is holding it back is the body of Christ that is still here. And one of these days, any moment, we are out of here. And when it happens, it is going to be turned over to him totally and completely. That is what it says. That is what it says in that passage in 2 Thessalonians, "Only He now that letteth until He be taken out of the way." That is us. The moment the Holy Spirit of God is taken out of this world and obliges the believers, it is turned over to him. And for seven years, the Tribulation unlike any time that any man on any portion of history of Earth had to experience what he is going to have to go through. And the Bible says that if you miss that, if you are sitting here this morning and you miss that and you go out of here this afternoon and the rapture comes, the Bible says you have no excuse at this point. God is going to send you strong delusion. The warning is there.

I tell people all the time, and people have different reactions. A lot of people get upset when you talk like I am talking. And I have never understood that. I started a story the other day where a police officer in Lee's Summit was driving on his patrol in the middle of the night and he saw flames coming out of the back of a woman's house. It was like two or three o'clock in the morning, and he broke down her front door, busted her window, went in and screamed and yelled and got her and her family out. When they are standing down there, in her interview, and the police officer, she is hailing him as a hero. The family would have been dead if this brave man had not risked his life to jump in there and break that door down and wake them all up. Hey, I am not doing anything different than he did. I am telling you, there is a heaven and a hell. I am telling you, it is light versus darkness. It is heaven or hell. It is God or the devil. You are on one side or the other. You are not in the middle of the road. I am just looking at you like that old Lee's Summit police officer, busting down your front door saying, "Hey, your house is on fire. Get out." Just let me retranslate it: "You are going to die and go to hell without Christ. Get saved." That is what it is. That is all it is because He is coming. He is coming. Every head bowed and every eye closed. We are going to be through here in just a moment. We will be on our way. I appreciate you today being here and appreciate you listening to what I have got to say today.