

Seal Number 1: As the World Believes the Lie Knowing We are ANCHORED to The TRUTH?

Revelation 6:2

All around us, the winds of apostasy are blowing stronger each day. As we open to Revelation 6, let me ask you: *Are you anchored in the Doctrine of Christ?*

More and more individuals who claim to be born-again Christians, and their churches and their denominations are slowly caving in to growing public opinion and societal pressures.

Satan, the god of this world is more at work than ever before. He is older, smarter, and has a vast communications system of world media consumption.

Our world is slowly self-defining God and His laws instead of honoring His Word. That falling away is called apostasy in the Bible from the compound Greek words: *apo* (from) and *histemi* (standing): apostasy – literally, "a leaving, from a previous standing."

Beware of Apostasy

Apostasy is not only denial of the Deity of Christ, or the Trinity of God.

Apostasy also encompasses the denial of Creation as described by the Bible, and substitutes ideas postulated by creatures, over the record given by the Creator.

Apostasy also denies that:

- Life begins at conception (as the Bible says); and that
- Marriage was designed by God only for a man and a woman (as the Bible says); and that
- Homosexuality is a sin just like fornication, adultery, and drunkenness (as the Bible says); and that
- Lying, stealing, pride, haughtiness, greed, disobedience to parents, drug usage, and witchcraft are all abominable sins (as the Bible says).

The winds are blowing stronger each day away from God in this world. It is like the start of a hurricane. Each hour the winds creep up in their strength, the trees and buildings sway, then bend, then often crack under the relentless push.

Ahead of us are stronger and stronger winds that cause more and more to fall away from

orthodox doctrines, then a remarkable and deceptive calm that is momentary (seal number 1), then the winds build to epic proportions until the whole world seems to worship the Lie-maker, Satan's protégé the Antichrist: instead of the Way, the Truth & the Life, Jesus Christ. That is the result of:

The White Horse of Deception

Follow along in your Bibles again as we stand and hear God launch the end of the world countdown with these words from Revelation 6:1-2 (NKJV):

Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

Jesus came and was the Truth. Satan comes as the Anti-truth, the replacement truth, the deceiver.

The First Seal is the Global embracing of the Lie. Last time we saw that each truly born-again person is first and above all else a:

Lover of the Truth

Here is a quick review of this key teaching that is what Christ emphasized more than any other description for us of the future.

Revelation 6:1-2 tells us that God is launching a white horseman to rapidly fill the earth with a false and deceptive peace. In a very short time **almost all of the earth** will follow this emissary of Satan in human flesh called the Antichrist.

But God is in control as we see that the Lamb, Jesus Christ, who died on the Cross, is the one that opens the seal releasing this global deception.

This white horseman is also a reminder from God, who us that the coming Antichrist initially conquers, not by military warfare but by lies and deceit energized by Satan. God deploys this force for deception, this first seal, and this global pervasive delusion.

Remember in Rev. 6:2 that God grants, allows, and gives to Satan's plans, the power to deceive the world. God is Almighty, and allows nothing that does not fit within His plan as

He actively works all things together for good.

The lesson is in that phrase that a “crown” was given. This is God granting authority. Nothing can move without His allowance. God is in control. God rules the affairs of the Universe, nothing escapes His notice.

Turn onward to Rev. 13:5-7. We will notice that this chapter details more about the Antichrist than any other; and again the emphasis is that God gave the beast its power.

Rev. 13:5-7 (NKJV) And **he was given** a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and **he was given authority** to continue for forty-two months. ⁶ Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ It was **granted to him** to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And **authority was given him** over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

So the power granted in Rev. 13:7 is part of the crown that we see when God launches the Tribulation in Rev. 6:2. God completely controls the events of the world, and nothing slips by Him. That is why He warns about:

The Hurricane of Apostasy

Amazingly, this first seal, and its white horseman of deception is an event on God’s timetable, much described in the Scriptures. We ended last time in 2 Thessalonians.

Please turn back there with me and as you do, remember that these twin epistles to the church in the city of Thessalonica, were Paul’s first epistles. Paul taught them more about Christ’s end time plans, than anyone except John in Revelation. As we look at 2 Thessalonians 2, we see that:

First, Truth Gets Abandoned: *2 Th. 2:3 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**,*

Then, Almighty God Gets Pushed Aside: *2 Th. 2:4-8 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.*

Then, Satan Amazes the World: *2 Th. 2:9-10 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.*

So, God Sends Strong Delusion on Truth Neglectors: *2 Th. 2:11-12 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.*

Look closely at v. 11 for a moment. This is another tie to the first seal in Rev. 6:2. God is sending strong delusion. God unleashes the first horseman. He is representing a white, deceptive, deluding lie that fills the earth. God plans, sends, and warns us about the:

Global Delusion Upon the Unrighteous Ones

Notice the application that Paul gives them. Paul tells them what God does when He saves us. God makes us lovers of the truth.

Are you a lover of truth this morning? Do you treasure the Word, study the Word, and know the Word?

The events of Revelation should impact our lives now, it was not written just for people then, but for us, God's servants now.

It was written for God's servants to know how to live as we move towards the end of days. The characteristic first introduced to us by God is, that when He launches the Tribulation it is into a time of:

Global Apostasy

That is God's plan. Listen again to Christ's sermon back in Matthew 24, and see the warnings about deception.

Matthew 24:5, 11-13 ***For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and***

will deceive many. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

There is a timeless lesson: the best way to combat false doctrine is to be in love with Jesus Christ and fleeing sin.

Matthew 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

This hurricane of apostasy is blowing stronger, but it has been around for a long time. In fact, things were so bad in Christendom, the visible church of followers of Christ, about one hundred years ago, that the greatest Bible teachers of that generation banded together to put up the flag of truth.

This group of conservative, Bible believing and teaching pastors and professors sat down and declared what were the “non-negotiables” of the faith. They published their confession as a form of:

The Fundamentals of The Faith

At the end of days, truth is under attack and lies will abound. That is why Jesus said watch out for false teachers and counterfeit religion.

When faced with a profusion of false teachers, cults, and apostasy at the turn of the century, evangelicals produced a defense of true orthodox doctrine, that was published and distributed from 1909-1915.

The writers who contributed to this series read like a “Who’s Who of Christianity” of the day. They were:

- R.A. Torrey [D.L. Moody’s assistant and then the founder of Biola, the Bible Institute of LA],
- B.B. Warfield [of Westminster Seminary],
- J.C. Ryle [a well known pastor and devotional writer],
- G. Campbell Morgan [an expository Bible teaching pastor],
- C.I. Scofield [author of the study Bible],
- James M. Gray [President of Moody Bible Institute],
- A.T. Pierson [widely know devotional writer], and so on.

These men distilled down the fundamental beliefs that distinguish a true believer from a false or counterfeit one. They boiled down all theology into seven essentials. They then presented and explained these seven doctrines in a multi-volume set of books called “***The Fundamentals***”. From those volumes we can find:

Seven Essential Doctrines

Here is their list of the seven essentials, and the guide to use to uncover when someone is a false-teacher and on a course heading towards “falling away” from truth.

INSPIRATION: All we know and believe about God is based on His Word, so they affirmed the Inspiration and Reliable Historicity of the Bible.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

DOCTRINE: God’s Word teaches clear doctrines about Jesus Christ and His Church, so they specifically named the cults who presented false gospels in their day such as the errors of the Jehovah Witnesses, Mormonism, Christian Science, Spiritism, and so on.

Titus 1:9 (NKJV) holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

DEPRAVITY: God's Word declares the reality of sin, so they affirmed that man is not basically good, but born a sinner.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

SUBSTITUTION: God's Word only presents Biblical salvation as received only by faith in the God-incarnate Christ Jesus who became sin for sinners to save them.

2 Corinthians 5:21a (NKJV) **For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us**, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

IMPUTATION: God's Word teaches that salvation can not be earned at any level, and is dispensed by God not by any church and cleric, thus they clearing exposed the errors of Roman Catholicism, and every other religion of human achievement and works

righteousness.

2 Corinthians 5:21b (NKJV) For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, **that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

CHRISTOLOGY: Finally, they most fervently declared that all error starts in some way with an incorrect view of Christ, so they strongly affirmed the Deity, the work, and the personal visible Return of Christ.

2 John 1:9-11 (NKJV) Whoever transgresses and **does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.** He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹ for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

CREATION: God is revealed from cover-to-cover in His Word as the Creator of the Universe just as described in the Bible, so they exposed the grave errors of Evolutionism and Darwinism.

Colossians 1:15-17(NKJV) He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For **by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible**, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and **in Him all things consist.**

Why Does Biblical Creation Matter?

For a moment, think about why the Doctrine of Creation (or believing God's account of Creation instead of mankind's theories) is so important.

Would it surprise you to know that Americans are actually looking for an ET (extra-terrestrial being) like this "Superman" to come and help? According to pollsters, 72 percent of Americans believe that there is life beyond the earth; 48 percent believe UFOs are real; and 15 percent have seen one.

What do UFOs do to the Word of God and our faith? I have concluded that much of what is called UFOs are probably demonic!

UFOs would support naturalistic evolution to the point of believing that perfection would overcome death, disease, and so forth. When people believe in extra-terrestrial intelligence, that would mean that evolution has gone on for who knows how many billion years and, somewhere out there, life has ascended higher than here on earth.

Extra-Terrestrials lessen the incarnation of Jesus. If there really are many super-powerful aliens out there, this would lead to humans thinking that Jesus wasn't that special. We can overcome death and disease with scientific marvels that higher intelligences have to share with us. What does Jesus matter if they can save us from oblivion, death, and diseases?

Extra-terrestrial Superior Life Erases the Creator

If there is life out there in the Universe, and these alien beings are trying to contact us, then humans could conclude:

- The earth is just an insignificant dot in the universe.
- Man is not the crown of God's creation.
- Sin is just our problem, or not even a problem at all.
- Hope lies in contact with some of these "higher" life forms.
- Christ's death was a local rather than a cosmic event.
- The Word of God is anachronistic, local, and out of touch with the big picture of the cosmos.
- We are not in God's image.

That is what evolution, science fiction, and UFO-ology teaches!

And those lies of Satan are deceiving mankind and thus determining their eternal destiny—separated forever from God in the lake of fire with the devil and his angels.

We need to spread the Truth to the perishing every chance we get!

Beware of the Lie

When Christ returns there will be powerful, pervasive, and universal lies backed by the most believable signs and wonders ever witnessed on planet Earth.

When Jesus came to earth, He was God in human flesh; as the Christ, He was the expression of all the promises of God.

To think that **the Christ** in all His grace and beauty came to earth, stayed for thirty-plus years, was rejected as false and fake, and **almost no one followed Him**, is bad enough.

But to know that Satan is going to send to earth the expression of all of mankind's desires in the person of **the Antichrist**, and in a very short time **almost all the earth will follow**

him, is absolutely heart wrenching!

The winds of apostasy are blowing stronger each day. Are You anchored in the Doctrine of Christ?