

Why Would God Want Every Church of Every Generation to Study the Revelation of Jesus Christ?

Revelation 6:1-17

The Book of the Revelation has always been regarded, by all who have taught it, as unlike any other of the books in the Bible.

Revelation is not only the ending to God's Word, it is also an invitation from God.

To prepare us for our overview of all 17 verses of Revelation 6, look with me again at the first 8 verses of Revelation 1. Right from the opening words of this book, God explains to us:

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As we read these eight verses we will see the purposes of God for culminating the Bible with this Book called Revelation. Please stand with me and listen to why God has sent the book of Revelation to us Christ's church:

Revelation 1:1-8 (NKJV) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

These first 8 verses show us where God is going with this message He wanted every generation of Christ's church to hear, to read, and to do. What exactly are we to hear and read?

To Emphasize the Glory & Power of Christ

- ***So we can see, follow, and trust Jesus Christ as the Almighty God, the Son:*** that is the message of chapter 1's immense description of the Risen, Glorified, and now Unveiled Christ.

That is who Jesus really is. God wants the Risen Christ unveiled to our understanding. He is no longer humbled and in the form of a servant. He is Omnipotent & Almighty. Think of Jesus as: "The Alpha & Omega, The Beginning & the End, Who was and Who is and Who is to come, the Almighty".

That is whom we love, serve, and trust today.

- ***So we can know that Almighty Jesus Christ is watching & working with His churches:*** that is the message of chapter 2 & 3's amazing seven letters.

That is why Paul said that Jesus is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think. Jesus is the Almighty Savior of the Church. Nothing is too hard for Him in our personal lives, family lives, and ministry lives.

That is who we pray to: Almighty Jesus. That is who we abide in: Almighty Jesus. That is what God wanted us to see, to know, and to be blessed by in Revelation.

- ***So that we can see what happens when Almighty Jesus Christ Returns:*** for His bride the church to bring them around God's Throne, that is the message of chapters 4 & 5. That is what God wanted us to see and understand the immensity of what that means.

Almighty Jesus the Judge, to the world as King to pour out His wrath upon sinners and to rescue Israel, that is the message of chapters 6-19. Jesus has designed each stage of His return. First people are allowed to be as bad as they want to be, and the world goes crazy and ¼ of them die. Then Jesus begins to unleash the wrath of God. Then the world shakes, and people cower, and Jesus returns in blazing fire taking

vengeance on rebels.

That is what God wanted us to see, understand, and be blessed to know that all sin will be dealt with, no one will escape the Great White Throne of Christ's Judgment.

A picture has been said to be worth a thousand words. What pictures can we draw from these verses to help us understand and do what He desires us to do?

God's Plan Pictured for Us

Almost every Bible teacher who interprets the Scriptures normally, the way we would any other thing we read, comes to the conclusion that all of the prophecies in the Old Testament about Israel as a nation, are like the events described in Revelation 6-19: they are both events in the future. That's how they were plainly described in both places as future, unique, and global.

Such a plain, simple, and normal treatment of God's Word necessitates that we distinguish clearly between God's plans for Israel and for the Church. My perspective on explaining God's Word could be described as: interpreting the Scriptures consistently using the literal, grammatical, historical method; and from the pre-tribulational, pre-millennial perspective.

Revelation's Seven Clear Events

The Book of the Revelation takes us through seven very clear and simple events in the 22 chapters. Here they are exactly in the order revealed by God in His Word:

1. Christ's church on Earth (chapters 1-3); Then we see
2. Christ's church in Heaven (chapters 4-5, 19:1-10) by way of His coming to take us to Himself promised in John 14, Acts 1, 1 Cor. 15, and 1 Th. 4. Then we see the promised
3. Tribulation events in Heaven and on Earth, with two halves as described in God's Word (chapters 6-18), then the
4. Second Coming (chapter 19:11-21), then the
5. Earthly Millennial Rule of Christ (20:1-6), then the
6. Final Rebellion and Great White Throne final judgment (20:7-15), and then
7. Eternity & Heaven (chapters 21-22).

Those clearly described events look even clearer with a chart picturing them. With the chart the events that are explained and described in other parts of the Bible can be fit clearly into place.

Now watch as I place around the framework of Revelation, the other two events that Jesus, John, Paul & Luke add into this amazing panorama of the future. Those events are the Rapture of the Church and the Bema Seat Judgment of Believers.

First, John records how Jesus promises us a place in His Father's House that He is going to prepare for us (John 14), that He is coming back to receive us and take us home.

Second, Luke 24 adds that Jesus left His disciples in an event seen only by them, while he blessed them and went up into the clouds. Luke continues in Acts 1 capturing Jesus saying that He was coming back in the same way He just left: for His disciples, seen only by them, showing down His blessings.

Finally, Paul explains that this private, unseen by everyone but believers return of Christ was going to be a snatching (Greek work *harpadzo*, Latin word *rapturos*) that takes place in a twinkling of an eye and involves only those of His Church who are living and dead (1 Th. 4). Then Paul adds that what follows is a judgment of the faithfulness of each believer at the fires of Christ's Bema Seat (1 Cor. 3 & 2 Cor. 5).

So those are the "extras" that Paul gives us to fit into the seven-part grid of Revelation. So a map of God's plans for Earth, us in the Church, all lost people, and the Jews His chosen people of promise looks just like that.

Most dispensational Bible teachers, who interpret the Bible primarily as literal so they see a clear difference between Israel and the Church: would hold to something like these seven simple events in Revelation.

Now, applying the insights of our Almighty and Returning King, look at a quick survey of what that means in the 17 verses of Revelation 6.

The Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Seal # 1: The White Horse & Rider is that global deception, false peace and prosperity and the rise of the superman called the Antichrist. The Bible does not say how long this period lasts but it could last up to 42 months since the Antichrist is only allowed to do his evil for 42 months. What all happens during this first seal? The Antichrist rises as a superman in the world scene. He solves the Aran-Israeli problem (Dan. 9:27) by making a peace agreement/covenant. Then he allows Israel to build a Temple (Rev. 11:1). That may take up to 42 months.

Seal # 2: The Red Horse & Rider is the rapid spread of the Revived Roman Emperor's widening conquest of humanity through bloodshed and war, which God tells us that he

“takes peace” (v. 4). The great sword is the same word that is used for a Roman Legionnaire’s smaller, battle sword used for close in warfare. So this is killing, warfare, and death from fighting.

Seal # 3: The Black Horse & Rider is the spread of famine and scarcity. Upheaval, unrest, and warfare disrupt global food supply chains and there is widespread starvation.

Seal # 4: The Pale Horse & Rider is the horrific duo of Death and Hades. Death takes the body and the Grave or Hades takes the soul. The means of such death across the world will be all of the warfare and famine of the second and third seals, plus the addition of most likely pestilences and plagues called “beasts”. All told the first half of the Tribulation’s seven year (Daniel’s last week of the 70) is a net loss of one in four humans.

Seal # 5: The Prayers of the Martyrs are unleashed. Just as our prayers for God’s Kingdom to come are going to be reflected in His wrath during the Tribulation, here we see those who have been slain for their witness for Christ. They are in heaven, so they are perfected, so nothing they do is wrong or sinful. It is righteous in Heaven to ask God to judge the evildoers of this Earth. The martyrs pray, and God powerfully responds. Those prayers break forth in the next seal. As if a global dictator, global wars, famines, pestilences, and death were not enough, now we see God’s Wrath in action. All of the troubles of the Tribulation so far, were generated by humans. Now comes a little taste of the Wrath of God.

Seal # 6: The Wrath of God is unleashed and the whole Earth shakes. What an awful time that will be. God unleashed six forms of wrath and touches every level of humanity. Look at the exact wording John uses.

Revelation 6:12-17 (NKJV)

I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold,

1. there was a great earthquake; and
2. the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and
3. the moon became like blood. 13 And
4. the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 Then
5. the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and
6. every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

15 And

1. the kings of the earth,
2. the great men,
3. the rich men,

4. the commanders,
5. the mighty men,
6. every slave and
7. every free man,

hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

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That is what God is doing. That is what He wants us to know. But the purpose is not for us to try to figure out every detail of how all that fits in our world today.

The purpose is to see Jesus Christ clearly as the Almighty God the Son. Risen. Walking among us in His Church today. Coming is Fiery Indignation taking vengeance on all who reject Him.

What exactly has He left us to do? Go into all the world and declare the wonders of Him who has called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

That is the Gospel.

That is our Mission in Life.

That is what we are going to answer for at His Bema seat.

How good and faithful are we being today as His servants?

That is all that matters forever!

The word beast could better be translated monster. It's the same term that we noted was in chapter 11 and verse 7, in the one who killed the two witnesses near the end of the Great Tribulation time. Very close to the end. But now we're backtracking and we're seeing the beast as he comes, as he arises out of the sea. The term therion, translated beast or monster, is used to describe some rapacious, some vicious, some killing animal. By the way, it is used forty-six times in the New Testament and thirty-five of them in the book of Revelation.

Here is a powerful monster, as the details of this chapter will further reveal. And I believe you have to understand this monster in two ways, or really in a two-fold way, a dual way. You have to understand him as both a person and a system, both a king and a kingdom. He has to represent a kingdom because of the complexity of the description here, having ten horns and seven heads and on his horns were ten crowns and on his heads were blasphemous names. Obviously this is a complex monster.

And yet he is always described with personal pronouns...he, he, he, him. And clearly Daniel and Paul in 2 Thessalonians and the book of Revelation see him as a person. He is both this monster, a king and a kingdom. A way to look at it would be to see the satanic final world empire inseparable from the satanically empowered man who leads it...as inseparable as Adolph Hitler was from the Third Reich.

So the dragon, Satan, expelled from heaven as his defeat by Michael and the angels, comes to earth with all of his demons. He stands there positioning himself to maintain control of the earth even in the midst of the wrath of God and all the judgments. He sinks his great feet, dragon's feet as it were, into the sand to hold his ground and he summons out of the sea this great personality so he can fight the last battle with God and Christ. A monster coming from the sea is the final satanic empire embodied in the final satanic man.

Think about Germany in the mid nineteen thirties, I don't know if you go back to that time in your history in the things you've studied, but if you do you would find out that Hitler didn't just pop up out of nowhere. He didn't come from the top down. He came from the bottom up. Why? Because people in Germany in the thirties were in economic despair. They were in spiritual despair. There was political chaos. They were experiencing economic depression. Small business were collapsing all over Germany one by one in every city. Millions of people were out of work. It was a desperate time and people were looking for somebody to lead them out. And Hitler knew the mood of the people and the strategy of the moment. Adolph Hitler started out as a lowly corporeal, worked his way up in the Reichstad(?) until he was at last in charge of everything. He emerged from absolute and utter obscurity to become the central figure in the world and himself demon possessed. From that position of power which he gained because of the chaos, he plunged the whole of Europe into his bloody reign of terror which was a preview of what it will be like on a worldwide scale when the Antichrist comes. One greater than Hitler will arise out of the chaos that will prevail in the world and be a man of marvelous appearance, transcendent ability and indescribable magnetism. The problem is,

he will be possessed and indwelt and moved by a demon out of the abyss. He will have great authority. The world will give the authority for all of it into his hands.

Now I reminded you last week that this is not new to believers. This is not something God's people are just finding out. Even when the book of Revelation was written in about 96 A.D. at the end of the first century, thirty years or so after most of the rest of the epistles were written, though it was so much later and though here you have this explicit portrayal of Antichrist in chapter 13, this is not new.

Already Daniel wrote very much about the Antichrist in chapter 2, chapter 7, chapter 8, chapter 9, chapter 11 of his Old Testament prophecy. Jesus certainly commented on Antichrist as He affirmed Daniel's description of the abomination of desolation which the Antichrist will perpetrate. Paul then gave us further insight in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 which was one of the earliest of the New Testament epistles. And John himself writing in 1 John chapter 2 discusses the reality of the Antichrist's spirit which is in the world.

Even in the book of Revelation 13 is not the first mention of the Antichrist.

We find him first mentioned in Revelation 6 as the rider on a white horse who comes to conquer.

We find him again mentioned in Revelation 11:7 and there he is called the beast which comes out of the abyss which is how he is described here also in chapter 13. So the Antichrist's spirit, the satanic efforts to destroy Christ have always been at work.

In fact, Revelation 12 of Revelation described that whole Antichrist movement from its very beginnings, but now in Revelation 13 we come to the final expression of the Antichrist's attitude in Satan's superman, this amazing intellectual genius, this outstanding orator, this master politician, this commercial wizard, this military mastermind this power unequalled, this great religious leader who himself claims to be God, the most incredible leader ever. We find him detailed for us in an amazing portrait that is very consistent with the words of Daniel, the words of Paul and the earlier description of John in the very same book of Revelation.

Without begging the point, just to remind you and for those who weren't here, he is Satan's supreme human instrument to destroy Israel, to prevent her salvation and kingdom, to kill believers, to conquer the world and to defeat Christ so that Satan can get what he wants, and that is to rule as God.

The Ultimate Superman—the Beast

*I was considering the horns, and there was ... a little one ... before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were **eyes like the eyes of a man**, and a mouth speaking pompous words (Daniel 7:8, emphasis added).*

Impossible? No. He is coming. He may well be walking around today. Ever since Eden, mankind has sought to be "like God" and in this insatiable quest has come the glorification of the "creature more than the Creator." This exaltation of man has allowed men of strong persuasion to be able to rise to extreme heights of power. In history these have been the Ramses, Alexanders, Caesars, and Napoleons. But there is a man on the horizon whose rise

shall be as the sun's rays across the earth; he shall be the embodiment of such power and personage that the entire world will be astounded by him. Thus, he will be sought after like no other leader before.

He will be one who seems to stop all threats from weapons of mass destruction. He will take charge and bring an end to the simmering hatred and volatile ethnic conflicts around the planet. The global fear of terrorism, biological warfare, and food shortages will cease through his leadership. He also seems to triumph in a global form of religion that the world can finally agree to. It may even be a counterfeit version of Christianity because "anti" means "in place of" Christ.

Here are some of the attributes that the Antichrist—this Superman of evil—possesses: (Emphasis added in the following verses.)

The Antichrist is Super-intelligent. He is portrayed as a Superman of intellect: "... *In this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man ...*" (Daniel 7:8).

The Antichrist is a Super-communicator. He is notable as a Superman of communication: "... *a mouth speaking pompous words*" (Daniel 7:8).

The Antichrist is a Super-politician. He is a Superman of politics who has unusual abilities to lead and persuade, and seems to conquer in peace: ... *he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue* (Daniel 11:21). In Revelation 6:2 he will ride a *white horse* and go out *conquering and to conquer*.

The Antichrist is a Super-businessman. He possesses extraordinary business abilities, and is a Superman of money: "... *He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; ... He shall destroy many in their prosperity ...*" (Daniel 8:25; see also Revelation 18.) He will organize or just use a global digitalization of commerce.

The Antichrist is a Super-general. He is the ultimate military strategist, a Superman of the military: "[He] ... *shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces*" (Daniel 7:23). We see the same power revealed in Revelation 13:4 and 7: *So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" ... And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.* He rules the world!

The Antichrist has a Super-ego. He is the Superman of megalomaniacs who lust for great and grandiose performances: ... *The man of sin ... 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* (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4). From this, we clearly see his yearning to be "like the Most High God"!

Imagine a leader as winsome as Reagan, as fearless as Alexander the Great, as mesmerizing as Hitler, as beloved by his people as George Washington, as great a leader as Moses, as unstoppable as Ghenghis Khan, and as spiritually charismatic as David—all in ONE man.

Now imagine that man openly displaying supernatural power in public, and being seen worldwide by way of the electronic media! It will appear that he is from heaven, and he will claim to be God. He will do miracles that everyone can see and believe in, and then offer himself to the world as their Christ.

There is a day coming soon when most people on earth will want to follow this ultimate “Superman.” That is the saddest commentary on the fallen heart of humanity there could ever be—always wanting the wrong choice!

We have had several warm-up acts by Satan for this future main event of the final Antichrist. We can see the way Satan works most clearly in the life and accomplishments of Adolph Hitler. Hitler showed the world how just one man can lift a nation from the depths of economic ruin to the heights of power in a very short time (1933–1939)—and then lead the world into the deadliest war of all time (1939–1945). In six years Hitler came uncomfortably close to conquering the world, which is a vivid example of how Satan can indwell and completely harness one man.

Hitler was an Antichrist. Rick Warren writes, “People who had personal contact with Hitler often spoke of the strange hypnotic power he was able to exert. In 1943, 100,000 young people in brown shirts filled the Olympic stadium in Munich, Germany, the largest stadium in the world at that time. They formed with their bodies a sign for a fanatical man standing behind the podium. The message read, ‘Hitler, we are yours.’”²

At the monument to Hitler’s evil, the death camp Auschwitz, are the words of Hitler’s vision of a generation of young people without a conscience. These words are aptly hung on a wall, grimly reminding the visitor of the hell unleashed when this goal was realized: *I freed Germany from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience and morality. ... We will train young people before whom the world will tremble. I want young people capable of violence—imperious, relent-less and cruel.*

On display for all to behold are thousands of pounds of women’s hair, retrieved and marketed as a commodity by the Nazi exterminators, architects of the final solution that sent multitudes to the gas ovens. The incredible reminders cast an overwhelming pall of somberness upon the visitor.³

But how did Satan find and use Hitler? Find out in tomorrow’s lesson!

FRIDAY: Satan Was the Original Antichrist

*“You are of your father **the devil**, and the desires of your father you want to do. He **was a murderer** from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for **he is a liar and the father of it**” (John 8:44, emphasis added).*

Lucifer was the original Antichrist. Isaiah 14 reveals that he wanted the power of God and the worship of God for Himself. He demanded equality with the Lord God Almighty. In fact, according to Ezekiel 28, he was *“the anointed cherub [angel].”* He was *“full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.”* His response to his endowment by God was one of pride and rebellion. God rejected his power play and promised his doom in hell in the future. But until that time, Lucifer (Satan) is on the prowl, seeking likely candidates he can lead into occult worship. Rebellion gives Satan an open invitation to establish a stronghold in the rebel’s life. Understand this: occult involvement is actually worship of his infernal majesty—Satan!

Satan looks for rebels. Lucifer was the original rebel, and he is looking for rebels to enlist for his own selfish purposes. Rebellion against authority makes a person a prime target for satanic attack.

Hitler is a prime example of the rebellion-occult connection. His early life could be characterized by one word: failure. He had a meager existence while living on his dead mother’s limited savings and an Orphan’s Pension which came from his father’s service in the Customs Department. His attempt at higher education was thwarted. He wanted to be an artist, so he applied at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, but they refused to accept him because his sketches were not up to required standards. Next, he applied to the School of Architecture and was refused. Author Treavor Ravenscroft observes that because Hitler was unable to make friends, he became a more solitary and embittered figure.

To make a long story short, Hitler was angry at God and society because of his plight in life, so he rebelled against both. In his quest for power to change his plight, young Hitler turned to the occult. He began by spending all his free time in the Hofberg Library in Vienna, Austria. He read books on the history of the occult and Eastern religions, but the occult seemed to offer the power for which he was searching.

Demons controlled Hitler. The demons that controlled the demented soul of Adolph Hitler lured him and Germany into World War II, and then abandoned both him and his country to their fate. Hitler and his fellow conspirators came close to succeeding. They failed because the time was not yet ripe in the counsels of God for the forces of Satan to triumph. However, the whole Nazi era was a dress rehearsal for the coming of the beast and the consequent baptism of unregenerate mankind into just such a religion.⁴

Hitler—like Satan—was a destroyer. He found that Satan lived up to the titles given him in Revelation 9:11: *And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.* The translation of both words is “destroyer.” Hitler was used by Satan to destroy six million plus of God’s chosen people. Multiplied thousands more were destroyed in war. Then in mockery of Hitler himself, Satan motivated him to commit suicide, destroying himself.

One of the primary characteristics of those who get involved in the occult, like Hitler, is rebellion against authority. This rebellion is usually evident in one or more of the following three areas: (1) rebellion against parents; (2) rebellion against society; and (3) rebellion against Christianity.

Why do many of those who rebel against parents, society, and Christianity often end up involved in the occult? Those who know the Bible can tell you: rebellion and occult involvement are linked, *“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry ...”* (1 Samuel 15:23a).

Beware of giving place to the devil. Listen to Paul’s stern warning to Christians in Ephesians 4:27, *... nor give place to the devil.* Everywhere and always demons have lurked in the dark for the moment when a person becomes weak, when he arbitrarily abandons his human situation in the world order founded by God for him. ... After the first voluntary downward step he is compelled to the second and third with rapidly increasing speed. ... Man is unprotected against evil without the living God; he is like a boat without oars, exposed to the tempest, or like a baby without a mother, or like a cloud which dissolves.⁵ Today, thoughtfully and carefully read Ephesians 4:27–5:8 and note each area Paul describes. These are the potential places Satan starts devouring us spiritually. Avoid allowing him to find these “landing spots” in your life.

So that is why God always seeks to ground His children in truth. God wants firmly holding onto His truth. The Scriptures open with Satan twisting and negating God’s truth with his lies in Genesis 3. By Genesis 6, just 3 chapters further, God destroys the whole world of sinners except for 8 and puts up a global reminder of His truth in the sky called a rainbow. God wants people to be reminded of the truth of their Creator and His expectations.

By the second book of the Bible, Exodus, we see God chose a nation to be His light in the world. He commanded that a tent that taught the people about the ways of the Lord be built right in the middle of the camp of Israel. The advertising system God designed was amazing, with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night hovering over that tent—to remind them all day and every night that He was there and they needed to live like they belonged to Him. God wanted them to grow by regular exposure to His truth.

Later, an exquisite, golden Temple followed and three annual trips to Jerusalem with preparations to meet with the Lord were required of all families. God wanted them to grow by regular exposure to His truth.

Centuries of festivals in Jerusalem three times a year supplemented by a stream of prophets, priests, and kings followed. All these measures, instituted by God were for spiritual growth. God wanted them to grow by regular exposure to His truth.

Jesus is the Ultimate Expression of Truth

Then the Truth Incarnate, the Living Word of God is wrapped in humanity and sent to earth. Jesus is the exact and true representation of God (Heb. 1:3). If you see Jesus you have truly seen His Father.

The only link we have to God comes by faith in His Word (Romans 10:17). God's truth saves us, sanctifies us, and defends us from all attacks. Truth is of the essence. It is what we build our lives upon and place our hope in. God is Truth, Christ is the Truth, and His Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Lost people never receive the love of the truth. And sadly, in the last days (in which we live) many will turn away their ears from listening to truth.

Paul's world was hostile to the truth of God; and Paul warned that days to come would increasingly be filled with false teachings about God, and bad behavior by believers.

*II Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴And **they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.***

For times just like those in which we live Paul writes, Christ's church is to be filled with men who are sound in faith.

*Titus 2:2 that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, **sound in faith**, in love, in patience; NKJV*

You can't separate growth in truth from God's Word. Growth is a part of sanctification. We are sanctified by God's Word, and God's Word is Truth (John 17:17). So discipleship is to be the constant focus of the church because...

How are you in the truth department? Are you a pillar for God, grounded in the Word of Truth, filled with the Spirit of Truth, living the way of truth for God's glory? That is what He wants from us today.

Please stand with me and turn to #247 "Spirit of the Living God" and sing this as a prayer that we will get fuller and fuller with the Spirit of Truth this week!

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Why do many of those who rebel against parents, society and Christianity often end up involved in the occult? Those who know the Bible can tell you. According to I Samuel 15:23a rebellion and occult involvement are linked. The verse says,

“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry...”

Beware of Giving Place to the Devil

Listen to Paul’s stern warning in Ephesians 4:27, “nor give place to the devil.”

Everywhere and always demons have lurked in the dark for the moment when a person becomes weak, when they arbitrarily abandons his human situation in the world order founded by God for him...after the first voluntary downward step he is compelled to the second and third with rapidly increasing speed...man is unprotected against evil without the living God; he is like a boat without oars, exposed to the tempest, or like a baby without a mother, or like a cloud which dissolves”¹

Satan, Demons and Supernatural Power

The demons that controlled the demented soul of Adolph Hitler lured him and Germany into World War II and then abandoned both him and his country to their fate. Hitler and his fellow conspirators came close to succeeding. They failed because the time was not yet ripe in the counsels of God for the forces of Satan to triumph. However, the whole Nazi era was a dress rehearsal for the coming of the beast and the consequent baptism of unregenerate mankind into just such a religion.²

Hitler, like Satan—was a Destroyer

Hitler found that Satan lived up to the titles given him in Revelation 9:11 "And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon." The translation of both words is "destroyer".

Hitler was used by Satan to destroy six million plus of God's chosen people. Multiplied thousands more were destroyed in war. Then in mockery of Hitler himself, Satan motivated him to commit suicide, destroying himself.

Rebellion Attracts Satan

Always remember that rebellion against your parents, rebellion against God or rebellion against authority is Dangerous with a capital "D." It is an open invitation to Satan to

¹ Dr. Merrill F. Unger, *Biblical Demonology*, pp. 197-198.

² John Phillips, *Exploring The Future—A Comprehensive Guide to Bible Prophecy*, Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1984, pp. 227-228.

destroy your life!

Christ, on the other hand offers you an abundant life. If you have never trusted Christ as your Savior, I would urge you to receive him today. When you call upon Christ to save you from your sins, God delivers you from the power of darkness and brings you into the wonderful kingdom of His Son³.

Why does Satan promote false teaching and doctrine? As we saw this morning—only the REAL Christ can sign God's Name across your life.

³ Sources used, quoted, and adapted: Gerald Suster, Hitler: The Occult Messiah; Adolph Hitler's Occult Connections, Copyright © 1992, David L. Brown.