

# The Rise of Antichrist Pt 1

by Billy Strachan

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*The sermon warns of the rise of Antichrist and the importance of understanding the true Christ, recognizing the marks of the Spirit of Antichrist, and protecting ourselves from deception.*

**Duration:** 1:01:52

**Scripture:** 2 Thessalonians 2:1

**Topics:** "Antichrist"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of receiving a mark on the right hand or forehead, as mentioned in Revelation 13:16. He uses an illustration from his visit to Disney World, where he was stamped on the hand for re-entry. The preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the teachings about the Antichrist in order to avoid deception. He also mentions the need for endurance and preparation for future challenges. The sermon concludes with a discussion on a religious figure with supernatural power, potentially representing a central European confederation.

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## Transcript

We're going to make our proclamation, which is appropriate for the message I'm going to bring tonight, which will be the rise of Antichrist. But before we talk about Antichrist, let's talk about the true Christ. So these words are taken from Daniel chapter 2 verses 20 through 22 and chapter 4 verses 34 and 35.

The latter part from chapter 4 are the words of Nebuchadnezzar after God had dealt with him. He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation.

All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. He does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain his hand or say to him, what have you done? I've already announced the theme for this meeting, the rise of Antichrist.

This is part of the series on the end time, and it is a very significant and important part of God's total revelation concerning the end time. Personally, I believe that Christians who do not take the trouble and seek God to find out the basic teaching of the word of God about the Antichrist are in great danger of being swept away with deception. God has made knowledge available to us, and we are responsible for what we do with it.

Now this is not an easy study, and as I said the other night, you will need your mind. So switch it on if you switched it off, and let's trust God together to give us understanding and insight. I just need to know what we've got all around us.

You don't need to use it yet, but just be available. First of all, we need to study the meaning of the word or the phrase Antichrist, because we can learn a lot from that. The word Christ is taken from the Greek word Christos, which corresponds to the Hebrew word Mashiach, or Messiah.

And it means the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ. The preposition anti in front of it has two meanings, both of which I believe apply. First of all, anti means against, and of course we use that in modern speech, anti-war, anti-nuclear armaments, etc.

But the other one is a little less understood. It means in place of. So the operation of Antichrist has two phases.

Number one, against the true Christ to get him out of the way. And number two, to replace him with a false Christ. In 1 John 2 and verse 18, John speaks about the relationship of this to the last days.

1 John 2, 18, he says, Little children, it is the last hour, not just the last day, but the last hour. And as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many Antichrists have come by which we know that it is the last hour. This is a distinctive mark of the end time.

And then in the same epistle, chapter 4, verses 2 and 3, 1 John 4, verses 2 and 3. By this you know the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. That is, every spirit that confesses that Jesus came as God, man, and lived here as man and walked in the flesh is of God.

And every spirit that does not confess Jesus, now there are various different texts, but I'm taking the one which I consider to be the most reliable. Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming and now already is in the world.

Now there you have Antichrist in three forms. Many Antichrists, plural, the Antichrist, singular, and the Spirit of Antichrist. Now the Spirit of Antichrist operates through every Antichrist.

And down through the pages of history from the time of John till today, there have been many Antichrists. But there is one who is called the Antichrist, who has not yet appeared on the stage of human history. He is the ultimate manifestation of the Spirit of Antichrist.

Personally I'm inclined to think that his coming is so near that you can say his shadow has already fallen across the stage of history. That's a personal opinion. Now it's very important that we understand what are the marks of the Spirit of Antichrist.

And they're given to us. 1 John chapter 2 verse 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.

But they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. This is very important. The Spirit of Antichrist begins in association with the people of God.

It's not paganism. It's something very directly connected to Christians. But they don't remain with Christians.

They go out from Christians. This is very significant because it indicates, if I understand it rightly, that the Antichrist will arise somehow in association with professing Christians. In other words, he's not going to be some dictator that has no Christian profession or association.

But he's going to arise closely associated with the professing church. And then in verses 22 and 23 of 1 John chapter 2, John says, Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah? He is Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either.

He who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. So there's another mark of Antichrist spirit. It denies the relationship of the Father and the Son within the Godhead.

It does not acknowledge that revelation of the unique God. This is very conspicuous in one of the most powerful anti-Christian forces in the world. That is Islam.

The religion of Mohammed, which ferociously denies that Jesus is the Son of God. They will acknowledge that Jesus may have been the Messiah. But I was praying once with a Muslim who wanted salvation.

And he came up and I said, I'll lead you in a prayer. But when I said Jesus the Son of God, his mouth shot like a trap. He would not say it.

Some years ago Ruth and I were in Pakistan before Don and his team went there. And because we announced healing meetings, we had thousands of people come. Although it was a Muslim state.

And we reckoned that about eight or nine thousand people actually indicated that they wanted to be saved. So I always led them in the prayer. And they said it after me.

Now whether, what results followed, that's known only to God. But I always started this way. Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are the Son of God and the only way to God.

But any spiritual authority or force that denies the relationship of the Son and the Father in the Godhead, is a mark of anti-Christ. The great mosque of Omar which stands on the temple site in Jerusalem has inscriptions in Arabic and twice they say emphatically, God has no need of a son. Actually, this is a personal impression.

I think probably Islam is the most active, powerful, anti-Christian force at work in the world at the present time. And unfortunately multitudes of Christians are deceived because they haven't learned the tests. And then in 1st John 4 verse 3 it says, Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God.

And that is the spirit of the anti-Christ. So that's a more general mark. Any spirit that doesn't acknowledge what the Bible says about Jesus is a spirit of anti-Christ.

So you understand the spirit of anti-Christ is not paganism. It can only arise where the claims of Jesus have been stated. It's Satan's ultimate counter-attack against Jesus.

And against the Gospel. It's very interesting to me, and this is a personal impression I have, that the Bible records the first time the spirit of anti-Christ really moved. And I find it in Matthew 27 verses 21 and 22.

This is where Jesus is before Pilate and the Jewish religious leaders are accusing Jesus. Verses 21 and 22, The governor answered and said to them, which of the two do you want me to release to you? And remember the issue was, should it be Jesus or should it be Barabbas? He was going to release one

prisoner. Which will they choose? And they all said to him, Barabbas.

Pilate said to them, what then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ or Messiah? They all said to him, let him be crucified. You see there was a deliberate rejection of Jesus and the choice of another in his place. And Barabbas who was chosen was a political figure.

He was a man of violence and a murderer. And if you ponder on that for a moment, it's one of the most amazing facts of human history. That the Jewish people rejected Jesus and chose Barabbas.

Because Jesus had done nothing but good. He had never harmed anyone. He had healed countless multitudes.

He brought peace and love to multitudes. Why did the Jews make that tragic mistake? The answer is they were overwhelmed without understanding it by a spirit. Which was the spirit of Antichrist.

And I believe that that is a preview of what is going to happen in the world. And I think very shortly. I think God is going to confront the human race with a choice.

Do you want Jesus or do you want this other? And I think the same spiritual force will cause the vast majority of humanity. To say away with Jesus. We'll choose someone infinitely worse than Barabbas.

And that's why I think it's so important to teach this. Because I think every Christian needs to be instructed. That they will not make the wrong choice or follow the crowd.

Now there are various passages in the New Testament. That teach very specifically about Antichrist. And I'm going to deal with two of them briefly.

The first is 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. The other will be Revelation chapter 13. But we'll turn to 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2 first. And I'm going to go through this more or less verse by verse.

But I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it. So if you have your Bible it's good if you can follow it. I'm going to summarize it as follows.

Verses 1 and 2 teach us that the manifestation of Antichrist. Must precede the actual return of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps I should read the words.

Don't. I won't read the words. But Paul says don't let anybody convince you in any way.

As though the day of the Lord has already come. The day of the return of Jesus. Verse 3 let no one deceive you.

And how important those words are. I'd like to say them again. Let no one deceive you.

I said in a previous talk in this series. The greatest single danger that threatens us as Christians is deception. Let no one deceive you by any means.

For that day will not come unless the falling away comes first. And the man of lawlessness is revealed the son of perdition. The man of lawlessness the son of perdition is the Antichrist.

Who else was called the son of perdition? There's only one other person called that. Judas. That's right.

What was Judas? He was an apostle. Who apostatized. Again that's a clear indication that the Antichrist will have some kind of association with the church.

And he's called the man of lawlessness. And John says the spirit of lawlessness is already at work. But the Antichrist will be the final ultimate manifestation of man's rebellion against God.

And it will take the form of choosing a ruler who is in a rebellion against God. And who is against God's appointed ruler. The Lord Jesus.

But and this is very important. Paul says that will not happen until the falling away takes place. Now that's the New King James translation.

The NIV says the rebellion. But the Greek word is apostasia. From which we get the English word apostasy.

Now apostasy is a deliberate turning away from revealed religious truth. The word is only used in one other place in the New Testament. Where Paul is accused by the Jews of teaching apostasy.

In turning the people away from the the laws of Moses. So its primary significance is to turn away from revealed religious truth. And Paul teaches that the Antichrist cannot be revealed until there has been the apostasy in the church.

Because the church is the spiritual barrier to the activity of Satan. So Satan has to undermine the church before he can fulfill his evil purposes. And I want to suggest to you that we are living in the days of the apostasy.

There has been wickedness and immorality and covetousness and violence in the church through countless centuries. But it's only in this age and particularly in this generation. That nearly all the major denominations have officially rejected the great basic truths of the gospel.

Which are that Jesus is the Son of God. That he was born of a virgin. That he led a sinless life.

That he died an atoning death. That he was buried and that he rose physically the third day. And that he's coming back again.

And I don't need to acquaint you with the fact that these basic truths have been openly flaunted and denied in almost every major denomination. And not only in the denominations but there are many much smaller groups in which these truths are being attacked. Some years back my first wife and I had friends who attended a Methodist church in the United States.

And this is not an attack on Methodism. And these friends said to us in our church you can talk as much as you like about Plato or Socrates or Buddha or Martin Luther King. But if you start to talk about Jesus people get upset.

What is spirit is that. It's the spirit of Antichrist in its first phase. Get Jesus out of the way.

The second phase is replace him with another. And that spirit is at work in almost every area of the body of Christ today. You better identify it.

It can be very subtle. Can be very intellectual. Can be very theological.

But it's still the spirit of Antichrist. Now verses 4 and 5 state that the Antichrist will oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped. So that he will sit in the temple of God showing himself that he is God.

Now there's a lot of discussion about what the temple of God is. But I have come to believe myself that it will be a physical temple built on the temple mount in Jerusalem by the Jewish people. And I have to say that many Jews are actively preparing for that.

So much that they have schools for the Levites to teach them how to practice the sacrifices. Because you understand that this is a very elaborate ritual. It's not easy.

You have to know how to skin a sheep. What to do with the various different parts of the sheep. There's also those who are actually weaving the robes of the priests.

And there have been two attempts to break through onto the temple mount. And it is now suggested by some scholars that the actual place of the Holy of Holies was not where the mosque of Omar now stands. So that it could be possible to rebuild a temple without demolishing the mosque of Omar.

I'm not saying that's the way it will happen. But I've been awakened to the fact in the last few years that there is an intense pressure at work amongst the Jewish people to rebuild the temple. There is a teaching in Judaism which is not scriptural.

And it's not taught in all Judaism. That the one who will give us back our temple is our Messiah. That's not scriptural.

But if you're not familiar with the Jewish people. You have no concept of how significant for them the temple of Herod was. I'm always amazed because they never go back in their thinking to the temple of Solomon.

It's always the temple of Herod. Which is amazing because Herod was an Edomite. He was a wicked man who murdered all sorts of people including members of his own family.

And built this temple in order to appreciate the Jewish people. But there's a kind of spirit at work that says we want our temple back. And the one who will give us our temple back we will acknowledge as our Messiah.

So I personally believe that the Antichrist will at some time sit in a temple that has been rebuilt by the Jewish people. People say well it couldn't be the temple of God because there'll be unbelievers. I'm not convinced of that because the Jews are God's people whether they're believers or unbelievers.

And God is the God of the Jews. Whether they acknowledge Him or not. And if Jews build a temple to their God then it is the temple of God.

This is just one way of looking at it. As you'll understand I've spent a good deal of time meditating on this. And I've done it because I feel pressured living as we do in Jerusalem.

There's such a sense that the shadow of the Antichrist has fallen across the city. It's not something remote. It's something very close at hand.

And then in verses 5 and 6 Paul says do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things. And now you know what is restraining that he the Antichrist may be revealed in his own time. 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. Again this is a question that is discussed. But the restraining force is called both he and it.

Who and what. And I agree with those who say that it is the Holy Spirit. Until the Holy Spirit withdraws himself in some way the Antichrist cannot be fully manifested.

Verse 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. I'm personally glad that the true Christ will take care of the false Christ. I don't want to.

I don't want that task assigned to me. Because the Antichrist is a person of extraordinary cunning and wisdom and power. And I think it's appropriate the true Messiah will deal with the false Messiah.

All right. Verse 9. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan with all power, signs and lying wonders and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth that they might be deceived. Very important to emphasize that the coming of the Antichrist will be attested by many supernatural miracles and signs.

I've always said for years the obvious place for the Antichrist to arise is in the charismatic movement. Because his charismatics go overboard on the supernatural. Now I believe in the supernatural myself.

But I don't believe that every supernatural miracle is from God. I think it's so important that we learn to distinguish. Because otherwise we are inevitably going to be deceived.

And then it says with all unrighteous deception among those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved. There is only one protection. And that is to receive the love of the truth.

If you sincerely love the truth that will protect you from deception. But the word love in Greek agape is a very strong word. It means a passionate devotion to the truth.

It doesn't mean that you just read your Bible once every day or go to a church that preaches the Bible. It means that you esteem the truth above all else in your life. Lots of people who are called Bible believing Christians don't exhibit the love of the truth.

There are two ways you can understand the truth. The truth is Jesus and the truth is the word of God. And I want to exhort you to love the word of God passionately.

To take more time with that than you take with your television set or any other activity. Because if you don't you'll be deceived. I would say at the moment there is a great lukewarmness in this nation and in many other nations amongst the professing Christians toward the word of God.

A friend of mine came here to Britain. I must say this. I hope it will offend nobody.

Lance Lambert who is probably known to many of you. And he held a series of meetings throughout the British Isles and even in Jersey and in Northern Ireland and in Dublin. And they were attended by about

twice as many people as anybody had made provision for.

They had overflow crowds in almost every meeting. And Lance told us afterwards he understood one main reason why people were coming was that they wanted to hear the Bible taught. They did not hear it.

They heard all sorts of prophecies and revelations and theories but very little real teaching of the Bible. That has to change. Or the church in Britain will be swept away with the deception of antichrists.

Now it says verse 11 For this reason God will send them strong delusion. If you don't receive the love of truth and practice it God will send you strong delusion. And brothers and sisters if God sends you delusion there is no way you can avoid it.

You will be deceived and it will be a judgment of God. Because of our failure to love and obey the truth. And it says that they did not verse 11 God will send them strong delusion because otherwise they would believe the lie.

I think the word the is important. I think it's not just any lie. It's the lie.

And I believe it's the first lie that Satan told humanity. It was you shall be as God. And the amazing thing is that preachers in the charismatic movement are teaching this today.

And I'm not theorizing because I've read the actual words that they have uttered. You see Satan doesn't have to think of a new lie because the old one still works. What does it appeal to above all else in humanity in one word? Pride.

That's right. Pride the Bible says a lot of people says it goes before a fall but that's not what the Bible says. It says the pride goes before destruction.

And a haughty spirit before a fall. One of the things we are going to need to learn to do all of us is to humble ourselves. And bear in mind what I said the other day God doesn't do it for you.

You cannot say God make me humble because God says humble yourself. It's a decision of the will. And I suggest to you that you should welcome any opportunity to humble yourself.

Everything in us resists it but it can be the mercy of God. When people are unjust to you or make bad statements about you or don't treat you with appreciation you know what you should do? Praise God. It gives me an opportunity to humble myself.

And the Bible says everyone that humbles himself will be exalted. But everyone that exalts himself will be abased. See your business is to humble yourself and let God exalt you.

Don't do it the other way around and exalt yourself because God will have to abase you. There's a beautiful pattern of this in the eternal relationships. There are two significant persons one humbled himself and one exalted himself.

The one who humbled himself was Jesus who became obedient even to the point of death. Then the scripture says therefore God also highly exalted him. What's the therefore? Therefore because he humbled himself.

See Jesus did not get exaltation as a spoiled son. He was exalted because he met the conditions to be exalted. And this principle runs throughout the universe.

There are no exceptions whatever. Everyone who exalts himself will be abased. But thank God everyone who humbles himself will be exalted.

Now I don't want to get involved in this because I could go on for a long while. But let me just suggest to married couples one very good way to humble yourself is to apologize to your wife or your husband. Every time you say or do something that's out of place.

Don't brush it off. Don't shrug your shoulders. Say I'm sorry I shouldn't have said that.

I was unkind. I was impatient. I was irritable.

Please forgive me and then thank God for an opportunity to humble yourself. God will provide you with the opportunities if you're open. All right I think we've dealt enough with 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. Let's go to Revelation 13 and again I want to go through it as quickly as possible because I'm moving on.

Ruth told me last night I told too many stories and that's why I took so long. However I do know human audiences if you don't give them a little light relief from time to time they just tune out. All right Revelation 13 now I'm going to take the text which I believe is the best.

Which is essentially that's followed by the NIV. Although I'm reading from the NKJ. Then he, that is the dragon stood on the sand of the sea and then John says a beast and the Greek says a wild beast.

It's very important that we translate it right. It's a fierce destructive creature. A wild beast rose up out of the sea.

It had 7 heads and 10 horns. Let me point out to you that I don't think there's any good creature that has more than one head. All the creatures in the Bible that have more than one head are evil.

And I want to emphasize the church has only one head. Now the wild beast came up from the sea which I just understand to be the world of politics. But that's just a personal feeling.

It had 7 heads and 10 horns. Verse 2 says it has the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, the mouth of a lion. What does the Bible teach about the leopard? One significant thing about leopard.

That it cannot change its spots. So don't be deceived it cannot change its nature. One doesn't know what the bear and the lion are.

But there are two nations that are traditionally acquainted identified with the bear and the lion. The bear is Russia and the lion is Britain. That's right.

I don't say that's it but it could well be. It would be a central European confederation which got a little bit from Britain and a little bit from Russia. That's just a possibility time will show.

Then it says and this is important in the end of verse 2 of chapter 13. The dragon, that's the devil gave this creature his power his throne and great authority. So he is supernaturally empowered from Satan.

And then in verses three and four he goes through some experience of a death and a resurrection. Says I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded and his deadly wound was healed and all the

world marveled and followed the beast. I've often asked what would have happened if John Kennedy had been raised from the dead.

I think basically he would have had the whole world at his feet. Well it didn't happen but sometime or other something like that. It may not be a real experience but something's going to happen that will convince the people that this person died and came back to life.

Verse 4 so they, that's the world, worshiped the dragon and gave authority to the beast and they worshiped the beast saying who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him? Now here is a wonderful contrast. Keep your finger in Revelation 13 if you've got one there and turn to Matthew chapter 4 for a moment and you see the difference between the true and the false Christ. In Matthew 4 and verse 8 and following this is part of the temptation of Jesus that devil took him up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory and the devil said to Jesus all these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.

Satan has been looking for many centuries for one man whom he could empower to gain control of humanity and cause humanity to worship him. You see you know the original claim of the devil was equality with God and when he made that claim he was thrown out of heaven and he can no longer openly assert that claim. But there's one way he can still assert equality with God because there's one thing that belongs only to God and must never be offered to anybody else.

What is it? Worship. So if the devil can achieve worship he is in effect saying there you are I'm equal with God. But Jesus said to him away with you Satan for it is written you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve the true Christ turned down the offer.

He wouldn't make a bargain with Satan for the sake of worldly power. The false Christ will make the deal. That's the difference.

Verse 4 so they worshipped the people of the world. Worshipped the dragon that's the devil who gave authority to the beast. They worshipped the beast saying who is like the beast who is able to make war with him.

That to me suggests that somehow he will accumulate an arsenal of nuclear weapons which nobody would dare to challenge that may not be true but it's a possibility Verse 5 he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies and he was given authority to continue 42 months. Now this is very important. Who gave him that authority? God.

See we're going to face a situation in which God permits a certain evil ruler to exercise authority for three and a half years it could well be that many of us will be alive at that time. We need to bear in mind this is God's doing I think that's one reason why the Bible is so explicit about it. We could be astonished and say God why do you put permit this wicked man to rule the nations and to persecute the true believers I'm not sure that God gives an answer but he says it's going to happen and when it happens you better know I'm the one who has permitted it.

If you could see your faces I think some of you had never entertained that thought before. I think personally that a lot of us are going through experiences which are preparing us and we're learning that we cannot manipulate God. I mean we know all the truths about healing but we don't always get healed is that right? Why not? God doesn't always explain there are things God doesn't explain.

One thing that's essential to success in the Christian life is to acknowledge the sovereignty of God. He does what he wants, when he wants, the way he wants and he asks no one's permission, not even yours all right. Verse 6 then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name his tabernacle and those who dwell in heaven that's open blasphemy of the true God and it was granted to him by God to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Just absorb that for a moment God gave him permission to make war with the true believers and to overcome them. If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men the most to be pitied maybe that's one of the lessons we're going to have to learn.

Our hope is not fixed in this world it goes beyond time into eternity and not everything will be straightened out in time some of you don't look happy see there is a weakness in the contemporary charismatic movement that suggests you get all you want now and live in peace and prosperity for the rest of your life I didn't intend to say this but Ruth and I recently worked through the book of Job and at the end God I hope I'm saying the right thing I don't want to disappoint anybody but at the end after it all happened you know God appeared to Job and interestingly enough God had no more questions after he'd seen the Lord he didn't have to have an answer to every point in detail just meeting the Lord was sufficient and then the Lord said in effect now Job spoke about me what was right but

your three friends spoke about me what is not right and I've been pondering on that for more than a month and let me say it this way I really didn't mean to say this but I think God wants me to when you analyze the words of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar what were they preaching and the answer is the prosperity gospel you study it carefully everything will be alright, you'll never be sick you'll always have plenty of money in a sense it's all true but God said they didn't speak about me what was right Job came out and said some very bitter things about God and God said he said what was right, ponder that I don't think, I believe the prosperity gospel I've taught it for years, longer than most of the people that are teaching it, in fact some of them got it from me no I'm saying that because

they've told me that but it isn't the last word Amen I mean I'm saying this because I'm really concerned about you because you may end up embittered, disillusioned, disappointed if you don't make room for God's sovereignty in your life, what Don said about the fear of the Lord, I said Amen and Amen and Amen what he wants more than anything else is reverent respect for him and a willingness to acknowledge he knows his job he knows what he's doing he never makes a mistake, every choice he makes is right, put your hand up if you believe it because I do, alright remember you put your hand up a week from now, alright we're going on in Revelation 13, verse 8, all who dwell on the earth will worship him, that's the beast and in worshipping the beast they worship Satan whose names have not been

written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world so who will be exempt only those whose names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world in other words God preserves those whom he has chosen and the most important thing in a way is to know that God chose you again this is not widely taught in the church today but it happens to be true you're not a Christian because you chose to be a Christian you're a Christian because God chose you and that makes it much more secure many Christians are kind of anxious and striving and trying to make it through and wondering if they will, they haven't understood that God chose them from eternity, that he has a plan for their lives which is going to be worked out relax, stop trying to be so good and

enjoy God I want you to know that Ruth and I have learned these lessons the hard way I'm not preaching a theory, all right verse 9, if anyone has an ear let him hear I didn't even know that verse was there now verse 10 I'm going to turn to the NIV because I believe it's the more accurate translation that's verse 9 and 10 which says, he who has an ear let him hear if anyone is to go into captivity into captivity he will go if anyone is to be killed with a sword with the sword he will be killed that's almost fatalism isn't it if I'm due for captivity that's where I'll go if I'm due to be killed, to be killed I will then it says, and this is the application this calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints no matter what is happening no matter how you're treated no

matter how badly things may seem to go God expects patient endurance and faithfulness, shall I tell you something about endurance there's only one way to learn endurance you know what that is, it's by enduring and God is putting many of you through things that you don't understand and you don't like because you're going to have to learn endurance if you're going to survive and he's preparing many of us to endure much more than we're enduring right now can you say praise the Lord I'm sorry to say things that disappoint you but they just happen to be true I believe all right we're going on in verse 11 then I saw, I really am sorry I mean that sincerely I wouldn't want to dash your hopes or leave you feeling downcast verse 11 then I saw another beast coming out from the earth and he had two

horns like a lamb and he spoke like a dragon now the earth I believe represents religion that's just my personal opinion here is a religious figure and remember that religion is the most powerful force in humanity it's far more powerful than atheism or materialism and so if Satan is going to captivate the human race he has to have somebody religious to do it if the Antichrist is going to exercise total authority he has to use religion as a way of attaining that and it says this beast in verse 11 had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon he claimed to be a lamb but he was really a dragon he claimed to be a follower of Jesus but he didn't have the spirit of Jesus and he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to

worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed notice the supreme thrust of this his worship of the beast he performs great signs so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men and he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast what's the danger there in one word deception, that's right because of miraculous signs not all miracles attest the truth of the word of God some miracles are done in order to affirm lives and it was said, it was granted to him God do you really mean that are you really going to permit these practitioners of evil to do miracles God says yes and then he says in verse 14 he tells those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the

sword and die he was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed so here is something that is probably in the realm of the supernatural an image that can speak although with present electronic achievements you can do that how many of you have been to Disney World and seen the speaking image of Abraham Lincoln where he stands and he makes a speech so I'm not saying that will be I think it will be on a higher level than that but anybody who will not worship the image of the beast there is only one destiny to be killed I point out here that we have a satanic trinity and I'd just like you to notice that for a moment the dragon, Satan is the counterpart of God the

Father the beast, the Antichrist is the counterpart of the Son the false prophet is the counterpart of the Holy Spirit and the idol that they produce is the counterpart of the church see, Satan has no inventiveness

no creativity he can only imitate what God has already done there is a famous Latin saying Diabolus Simeus Dei the devil, the ape of God he has no creativity all right now then let's come to these exciting verses that everybody is interested in verse 16 and he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads now again this is just a little simple illustration ten years ago I went to Disney World paid my fee, went in came out and said I want to come back again so they stamped something on the back of my

hand and let me go but when I came back they said show us the back of your hand they shone ultraviolet light on it and they could see that it would be stamped with the date of the day so I was allowed in again now I'm not saying that anything as crude as that will be what's referred to here but it's just an example of way things are moving and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast or the number of his name now you can get away in that system with three things the mark, the name or the number but without those you cannot buy or sell you are excluded from all society now the number of the name of the beast fascinates many people and it says in verse 18 here is wisdom let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast for it is the

number of a man his number is 666 now the fact is that amongst Jewish people every name has a number and I believe the same is potentially true in Greek society because both in Hebrew and in Greek the letters of the alphabet also are numerical values the first ten letters are 1 through 10 after that it goes up by tens 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 100 after that it goes up by hundreds 200, 300, 400 and it depends how many letters there are in the alphabet how high you can go the Hebrew alphabet only goes to 400 the Greek goes higher so my dear wife Ruth come and stand here for a moment so that they can see you're really there has a Hebrew name which is Root which is just the same as English except that the final letter is just one sound it's R, Resh, Vav, Tav now all those have

numerical values so if you write her name vertically and write opposite each letter the value of the name then all you have to do is add up and you get the number of the name now Ruth met a rabbi in Israel when she first went there and he said to her your name Ruth is a very powerful name because it has a high number but I'll tell you what her name is I mean this is rather critical because of the 666 thing R is 200 the last letter Tav is 400 so that makes 600 so where are we with the middle letter the answer is it's 6 so Ruth's name is 606 you understand this is not, I mean this is not obscure it's an accepted fact now, thank you Smina I, because of this I checked on the value of Jesus in Greek which is the language in which we get this book and I wrote the letters down vertically wrote

opposite them the numerical value added it up and you know what I got 888 well I personally believe that's significant the false Christ is 666 the true Christ is 888 now it may come a time when there will be a name that you'll need to add up and if it adds up to 666 you better pack your bags and get ready to move you're laughing but I mean I think it's serious all right now we just turn to Revelation 17 for a few quick moments verses 12 and 13 do you remember the beast had 10 horns and it says here the 10 horns which you saw are 10 kings who have received no kingdom as yet but they receive authority for for one hour as kings with the beast these are of one mind and they will give their power and authority to the beast so the ultimate expression of gentile authority is a kingdom of 10

kings or let's say a community of 10 kings now I want to go back to the Old Testament and deal a little bit with Daniel

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