

Other Apostles made it very clear that this knowledge was to cause us to be alert, forsaking the ways of the world and growing in the faith.

2 Peter 3:17-18 - 17 You therefore, beloved, **knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest**, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, 18 **but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. NASB

1 John 3:2-3 - 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, **when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself**, just as He is pure. NASB

Therefore, we are to be **“on the alert”** and **“ready”** for the imminent return of our Lord in glory. With this in mind, we are to be keenly aware of the events that Jesus and the Apostles warned us would directly precede His coming. These things, says Paul, **“will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed.”** This **“apostasy”** is in the Greek, *apostasia* meaning (revolt or rebellion), and in the biblical context refers to a rebellion from the true faith. Paul’s use of the definite article, **“the rebellion,”** shows clearly that it was a known event in the minds of the Thessalonians. This is clear from the fact that Paul gives no explanation of this **“apostasy”** as if they knew full well what he referred to. Commentators debate whether this **“apostasy”** is a falling away from the faith by a multitude, or the final **“abomination of desolation”** act by the Antichrist spoken of by Daniel (9:27), Jesus (Matt 24:15) and in the Revelation (13:14-15). Regardless of which event Paul had in mind, the meaning of the passage does not change, for when Antichrist has risen to power to deceive the nations, that will also be a time of tremendous deception, characterized by a falling away from the true faith (Matt 24:10-13). Paul speaks of this event in unison with the **“revealing”** of the **“man of lawlessness.”** Here he clearly has the Antichrist in view. The fact that he is **“revealed”** speaks of the fact that he is in existence before he is revealed, but not clearly visible as to who he is, until of course the time comes and he is **“revealed.”** Notice here he is **“the man”** of lawlessness, and he is distinguished from Satan himself in verses 8-9. In this context Paul says the **“man of lawlessness”** is now being restrained by some definite personage (verses 6-7), and will also be the one **“whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming.”** This man is titled by Paul as THE man of lawlessness, as opposed to A man of lawlessness. This definite article indicates he is the one man spoken of in Scripture in many places who works a tremendous amount of destruction and evil in the days directly preceding the coming (*parousia*) of our Lord. This is in fact Paul’s main point in verses 1-3, that is, the single event of verse 1, **“the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,”** is going to be preceded by this lawless one, **“will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed.”**

B. the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. – Take note here that Paul gives this man two titles here. He is called both the **“man of lawlessness”** and also **“the son of destruction.”** Notice he is characterized by **“lawlessness”** and also **“destruction.”** These things are the very things that the Bible elsewhere describes as the things that characterize this man and his evil works. And even though he is the chief *human* opponent of God and Christ in the world, he will fulfill all that God had planned and decreed for him, and he will perfectly fulfill God’s plan in culminating this current age. This is surely the one which Daniel spoke of.

Daniel 7:21-22, 25 - 21 "I kept looking, **and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them** 22 until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom..... 25 'And **he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One**, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and **they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a**