

# Masterwork of the Messiah

## Expositional Study Of Matthew's Gospel

### *The King And The Kingdom: Part 2*

Matthew 24:1

Written By

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**T**hroughout the New Testament we repeatedly hear that Jesus is, in fact, coming back to rule and reign over the kingdom promised throughout the Old Testament . Jesus taught about this on several occasions. Here is one in particular:

<sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS (Matthew 16).

Paul, also, echoed this truth in his writings:

<sup>5</sup> Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God (2 Corinthians 4).

Peter reminded saints of this concept as well:

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. <sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness ... (2 Peter 3).

Peter's advice is well-taken. Christ's imminent appearance should move all saints to swift and radical holiness in daily living, knowing that at any moment we might have to give account unto Him regarding how we've run the Christian race. Such is the pragmatic nature of eschatology. It should leave you asking yourself, "Am I prepared to stand before Christ unashamed of my Christian walk?" And, for those who don't know Him as Savior, the question is even more fundamental, "What is keeping me from coming to Jesus in faith as my Savior so I am prepared to stand before Him?"

Peter wrote about Christ's coming because he had received personal instruction on the topic by Jesus on the Mount of Olives. As we see in Matthew's recounting of the prophecy lesson on that Tuesday evening before the Lord's crucifixion on Friday, all of the disciples learned that, contrary to their pre-conceived notions regarding the establishment of the messianic kingdom, there would be a time delay in the Lord fulfilling the kingdom motif as foretold by the Old Testament prophets. They learned about this delay when they asked Jesus some intriguing questions:

<sup>3</sup> As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24).

Jesus answered their questions in reverse order. In verses 4 through 35, He gave them the signs which would occur during the first half of Daniel's prophesied seven year tribulation (Daniel 9:24-27). Later in Revelation, John equates the seven seal judgments, which occur during the first 3 ½ year segment of the tribulation period, with the signs Jesus mentioned.

Conditions	Matthew	Revelation 6
False Christs	24:4-5	6:1-2
Warfare	24:6-8	6:3-4
Famine	24:7	6:5-6
Death	24:7-10	6:7-8
Witnessing	24:14	6:9-11
Cosmic Changes	24:29	6:12-23

There is minor deviation, as you might expect in prophetic/apocalyptic literature which describes intricate and mysterious future events; however, there is still a close thematic, chronological connection. Both settings buttress one major theological truth ...

## The Messianic King Will Bring The Kingdom (Matthew 24:1-25:46)

Christ's answer to the disciples' second question tells saints what cataclysms to look for in the arrival of the kingdom. We'll discuss His teaching by focusing on the question He addressed in detail:

### What Are The Signs Of The King's Arrival? (Matthew 24:4-35)

Starting in verse 4, Jesus gave His disciples the future signs pointing to His glorious arrival on earth to become the long-awaited Davidic King of Kings (2 Samuel 7; Psalm 89; Isaiah 9:1ff; 11:1ff; 24:23; 35:1-6; 54; 60; 61; 66; Jeremiah 23:1-8; 30; 31; 33; Ezekiel 34). As I have said, the base nature of these signs have occurred in every age since Christ's made this prophecy, but the ones Jesus describes are at a whole new, shocking level never seen by mankind. His likening these signs to labor pains pushes them into the future because, as we all know, these pains don't occur over a elongated period of time for a pregnant mother, but near in relation to the time of hard pains and the arrival of the baby. When these pains arrive then, they will set the world on notice that God is, indeed shaking the earth in His wrath and that He is about to break into our time and space dimension for regal purposes (Isaiah 24-27).

Starting in this study we will consider the signs which occur in the first half of the Tribulation, signs which announce of the eventual arrival of the King and the Kingdom.

*False Christs (Matthew 24:4-5).* Jesus began the identification of the sovereign judgment signs with a word of warning to saints:

<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. <sup>5</sup> "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

The verbal command to "see" or "watch" (Βλέπετε), followed by the negative (μή) gives us a present tense perpetual order to follow, regardless of the day in which we live.<sup>1</sup> We should always be on the lookout for those crafty false teachers who claim to speak for God, but who do not (2 Peter 2:1-22; 1 John 4:1), who claim to know the Scriptures, but do not because they twist and distort them, as the false teachers did in the Galatian and Colossian churches.

All of this leads to a logical, pertinent question: Is someone duping you right now, theologically speaking? Are you reading a book, or watching a DVD series which undermines sound, biblical doctrine ever-so-slightly? If so, distance yourself from them or from it and head back to people and writings of spiritual truth. Get back into the Word of God, for it is light to your path (Psalm 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19). Recommit yourself to ardent, focused prayer for you are in a spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:18ff). Read Christian books, by reputable, properly credential writers and scholars who can help you sort out the difference between truth and error. Always have your theological radar on, knowing our Adversary will only grow more crafty as we approach the arrival of our Messiah.

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<sup>1</sup> This command formula appears throughout the New Testament and each of us, as saints, should pay strict attention to its pragmatic meaning (Galatians 5:15; Colossians 2:8).

The Devil does deceive in stealthy fashion at times; however, what Jesus warns of here are numerous men who arrogantly claim they are, in fact, the Messiah. They will actually use the messianic formula to denote deity:

I am the Christ ...

This statement contains the emphatic “I am” statement spoken by Jesus to identify Himself as the eternal ontological I AM of all time and space (Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50; 14:62; John 8:28-58).<sup>2</sup> Sure, there have been crackpots in the past and present that’ve made this claim, but their followers were and are limited, numerically speaking. Jesus speaks, on the contrary, of the deception of “many” (πολλούς), a Greek word which speaks of large groups of people.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The first person personal pronoun followed by the first person verb “to be” is most emphatic in the Greek text: Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament And Other Early Christian Literature*: ①**pert. to being a large number, many, a great number of**

Ⓜpositive πολὺς, πολλή, πολύ

α. adj., preceding or following a noun (or ptc. or adj. used as a noun) in the pl. *many, numerous* δυνάμεις **πολλά** *many mighty deeds* **Mt 7:22b**, δαμονιζόμενοι πολλοί **8:16**. Cp. vs. **30; 9:10; 13:17; 24:11; 27:52, 55; Mk 2:15a; 6:13; 12:41; Lk 4:25, 27; 7:21b; 10:24; J 10:32; 14:2; Ac 1:3; 2:43; 8:7b; 14:22; Ro 4:17f** (Gen 17:5); **8:29; 12:4; 1 Cor 8:5ab; 11:30; 12:12a, 20; 1 Ti 6:12; 2 Ti 2:2; Hb 2:10; 1J 4:1; 2J 7; Rv 5:11; 9:9; 10:11**; 1 Cl 55:3ab. ἔτη **πολλά** *many years*: **Lk 12:19b** (εἰς ἔτη π.); **Ac 24:10** (ἐκ π. ἐτῶν); **Ro 15:23** (ἀπὸ π. [v.l. ἰκανῶν] ἐτῶν).—αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αἱ **πολλαί** **Lk 7:47a**. αἱ εὐεργεσίαι αἱ π. 1 Cl 21:1.—πολλά και βαρέα αἰτιώματα *many serious charges* **Ac 25:7** (cp. Ps.-Pla., Sisyph. 1, 387a **πολλά** τε και καλὰ πράγματα; B-D-F §442, 11; Rob. 655). **πολλά** και ἄλλα σημεῖα **J 20:30** (on the form X., Hell. 5, 4, 1 **πολλά** μὲν οὖν ... και ἄλλα λέγειν και Ἑλληνικά και βαρβαρικά; Dionys. Hal. 2, 67, 5; Ps.-Demetr. 142 **πολλὰς** κ. ἄλλας χάριτας; Jos., Ant. 3, 318; Tat. 38, 1. On the subject-matter Bultmann 540, 3; also Porphyr., Vi. Pyth. 28 after a miracle-story: μυρία δ’ ἕτερα θαυμαστότερα κ. θεϊότερα περὶ τάνδρὸς ... εἴρηται κτλ.).—ἄλλοι πολλοί *many others* IRo 10:1. ἄλλαι **πολλαί** **Mk 15:41**. ἄλλα **πολλά** (Jos., Bell. 6, 169, Ant. 9, 242; Just., D. 8, 1) **J 21:25**. ἕτεροι πολλοί **Ac 15:35**. ἕτερα **πολλά** (Jos., Vi. 39) **Lk 22:65**.—Predicative: πολλοί εἰσιν οἱ εἰσερχόμενοι **Mt 7:13**.—**Mk 5:9; 6:31; Gal 4:27** (Is 54:1). AcPl Ha 5, 16.—οὐ πολλοί *not many*=(only) *a few* οὐ **πολλαί** ἡμέραι (Jos., Ant. 5, 328, Vi. 309) **Lk 15:13; J 2:12; p 848 Ac 1:5**; AcPl Ha 11, 1. οὐ πολλοί σοφοί *not many wise (people)* **1 Cor 1:26a**; cp. **bc**. οὐ πολλοί πατέρες *not many fathers* **4:15**.

β. subst.

κ. πολλοί *many* i.e. persons—without the art. **Mt 7:22; 8:11; 12:15; 20:28; 24:5ab; 26:28; Mk 2:2; 3:10** (**Mt 12:15** has ascensive πάντας; other passages to be compared in this connection are **Mk 10:45=Mt 20:28** πολλῶν and **1 Ti 2:6** πάντων. Cp. the double tradition of the saying of Bias in Clem. of Alex., Strom. 1, 61, 3 πάντες ἄνθρωποι κακοὶ ἢ οἱ πλείστοι τ. ἀνθρώπων κακοί.—On **Mk 10:45** s. OCullmann, TZ 4, ’48, 471–73); **6:2; 11:8; Lk 1:1** (cp. Herm. Wr. 11, 1, 1b and see JBauer, NovT 4, ’60, 263–66), 14; **J 2:23; 8:30; Ac 9:42; Ro 16:2; 2 Cor 11:18; Gal 3:16** (πολλοί=*a plurality*); **Tit 1:10; Hb 12:15; 2 Pt 2:2**. AcPl Ha 5, 8; 7, 5; 11, 3. Opp. ὀλίγοι **Mt 22:14; 20:16** v.l. (cp. Pla., Phd. 69c *ναρθηκοφόροι μὲν πολλοί, βάκχοι δὲ τε παῦροι*=the thyrsus-bearers [officials] are many, but the truly inspired are few)—W. a partitive gen. πολλοὶ τῶν Φαρισαίων **Mt 3:7**. π. πῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ **Lk 1:16**.—**J 4:39; 12:11; Ac 4:4; 8:7a; 13:43; 18:8; 19:18; 2 Cor 12:21; Rv 8:11**.—W. ἐκ and gen. (AscIs 3:1; Jos., Ant. 11, 151) πολλοὶ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν **J 6:60, 66**.—**10:20; 11:19, 45; 12:42; Ac 17:12**. ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου πολλοὶ **J 7:31** (Appian, Iber. 78 §337 πολλοὶ ἐκ τοῦ πλήθους).

ι. **πολλά**—*many things, much* without the art.: γράφειν *write at length* B 4:9. διδάσκειν **Mk 4:2; 6:34b**. λαλεῖν **Mt 13:3**. μηχανᾶσθαι MPol 3. *πάσχειν* (Pind., O. 13, 63 al.; Jos., Ant. 13, 268; 403) **Mt 16:21; Mk 5:26a; 9:12; Lk 9:22; 17:25**; B 7:11; AcPl Ha 8, 19. ποιεῖν **Mk 6:20** v.l. United w. another neut. by και (Lucian, Icar. 20 **πολλά** κ. δεινά; Ael. Aristid. 46 p. 345 D.: **πολλά** κ. καλά; Ps.-Demetr., El. 70 **πολλά** κ. ἄλλα; likew. Appian, Bell. Civ. 5, 13 §53; Appian, Anab. 6, 11, 2) **πολλά** κ. ἕτερα *many other things* **Lk 3:18**. **πολλά** ἄν κ. ἄλλα εἶπεν ἔχοιμι Dg 2:10 (Eur., Ep. 3, 2, **πολλά** κ. ἕτερα εἶπεν ἔχω; Diod S 17, 38, 3 **πολλά** δὲ και ἄλλα ... διαλεχθεῖς). ἐν πολλοῖς *in many ways* (Diod S 26, 1, 2; OGI 737, 7 [II B.C.]; Just., D. 124, 4 [of line of proof]) **2 Cor 8:22a**. ἐπὶ πολλῶν (opp. ἐπὶ

Interesting. They won't be claiming they are Allah, or the Krishna, or Joseph Smith, or, well, you fill in the blank. As the messianic age approaches, which the Devil is well aware of, false messiahs with great oratorical ability coupled possibly with great powers, as with the sorcerers of Egypt, will come out of the woodwork deceiving open-minded, free-thinking, truth-is-relative, medicinal-marijuana smoking, we'll-believe-anything-but-Christianity folks.

These false Messiahs will, of course, be overshadowed and overpowered by the false Messiah of all false Messiahs, the Anti-Christ himself (Revelation 13). He will arrive on the world scene at the beginning of the Tribulation, and will, in a blitzkrieg fashion, assume world-power and prestige. The first seal judgment, which occurs at the commencement of the Tribulation and which parallels Christ's signs in Matthew 24, introduces us to the false Messiah, the Anti-Christ:

<sup>1</sup> Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come ." <sup>2</sup> I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer (Revelation 6).

Some wrongly conclude this is Christ, but it couldn't be for the following reasons:

- Christ is in heaven with His bride, the Church, fulfilling the Jewish marriage custom of the groom and his bride hiding themselves away for a seven day period prior to their presentation (1 Thessalonians 4:13ff). Here Christ and His Church will be obscured from the world for seven years.
- The other seal judgments in revelation are performed by evil riders, making Christ not logically fit into this narrative sequencing.
- Christ is pictured in Revelation 19 as coming with His Church and His angels to earth to judge the godless, to put an end to the tribulational period, and to erect His Davidic empire (Psalm 2).
- This rider wears a *stephanos* crown of a victor, not the crown of king, which is called a *diadem* in Greek. Christ would, of course, wear the latter.

The rider, then, is not Christ.

Who is the rider? The Anti-Christ, the false Messiah. He will come as a peacemaker in troubled social times, offering solutions to age-old national skirmishes nobody ever thought of before. His horse is white, the color of peace. According to Daniel 9:26-27, one of the first things he will do is solve (though temporarily) the Arab-Israeli problem:

<sup>26</sup> Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. <sup>27</sup> And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and

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ὀλίγα) over many things **Mt 25:21, 23**.—W. art. (Pla., Apol. 1, 17a) τὰ πολλὰ πράσσειν *transact a great deal of business* Hs 4:5b.

grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

“The prince who is to come” is none other than the Anti-Christ, the man of sin. He will step onto the world stage and gain great power and recognition by showing Israel and Hamas, Hezbollah, the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaida, and all other hostile, anti-Semitic groups how to live in peace with each other. He’ll provide the answer of all answers to the question, “How do you get peace if the charter of Hamas is to eradicate Israel?” He’ll not just establish a peace treaty between Israel and groups like Hamas. He’ll get the likes of Hamas to start using concrete from Qatar for building homes instead of tunnels. He’ll convince the likes of ISIS that they don’t need a world caliphate. He’ll possibly get the Iranians to settle for producing just nuclear power without going nuclear.

He, the ruler of a ten-nation Western confederation (Daniel 7), will promise Israel religious and military protection, thereby enabling the Jews to rebuild their temple and worship freely next to Muslims at the Dome of the Rock. Shocking. Jaw dropping. No wonder the world will follow after him. No wonder he sits on a white horse. We see how people will logically and instantly follow and worship him, for who wouldn’t be dumbfounded and full of admiration by one who could resolve this Gordian knot of a geopolitical issue? But his peace will be short-lived, lasting only 3 ½ years because he has other plans for Israel; namely, their total eradication.

The fact he, according to Revelation 6, verse 2 has a bow but no arrows may suggest he rises to power over the ten nation western confederacy by stealth and cunning, as opposed to open warfare, although the latter cannot be ruled out completely. Perhaps he employs cold war tactics, like the orchestration of the assassination of key political leaders concurrently, in order to shockingly and swiftly grab world power. Daniel addresses his rise to power in chapter 7:

<sup>7</sup> After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. <sup>8</sup> While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.

Comparing Daniel’s prophecy of chapter 7, concerning the final world empires being like wild, blood-thirsty, unpredictable beasts, to that of chapter 2, where those kingdoms are likened unto metals growing more brittle and inferior with the passage of time, we learn how the last beast, the Anti-Christ, possesses the brutality and military acumen of the ancient Romans as he topples three other horns/leaders of three western kingdoms in order to become the ultimate world statesman and political voice.

What will the Anti-Christ, the false Messiah be like?

- He will be different than other men. “Who is like unto the beast?” is the question from Revelation 13:4. John adds in this chapter how he will be seemingly assassinated only to supposedly rise from the dead: “I saw one of his

heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast” (Revelation 13:3-4). Concerning this deceptive death and resurrection, the late Hampton Keathley III observes, “The translations ‘as if it had been slain’ (NASB) or ‘seemed to have had a fatal wound’ suggest either an apparent death (near death) but did not really die. Literally the Greek says, ‘as slain unto death.’ There is really no ‘if’ here. Some have argued that the ‘if’ implies this is only an apparent death. Though I do not believe the beast will literally die and be brought back to life, we should note the exact same words are used of the Lord in Revelation 5:6 and certainly the Lord really died. If the leader is involved here, the key may be found in the word ‘slain’ which is *sphazo* ‘to slay, slaughter.’ It was a sacrificial term used of the animals of sacrifice. The use of this word indicates that the deadly wound will be designed to be like the slaying of the Lamb; it will be designed to imitate the death of Christ, if not in method, at least in purpose or function. So the use of this word doesn’t really prove it was a real death, only an apparent death. It suggests it was part of Satan’s strategy to imitate Christ’s death and resurrection. Here is Satan’s masterpiece of deceit.”<sup>4</sup>

Quite obviously, you can readily see how this resurrection will dupe the masses instantly. Christians, however, will know better and will resist him.

- He will be a great orator and a demagogue. As Daniel 7, verse 8 says, he will, “... *have a mouth speaking great things.*” People will be captivated by every word out of his mouth, much like the Germans were in WWII with Hitler. He will also have a blasphemous mouth, one prone and dedicated to trashing everything about Christ and Christians, “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” (Revelation 13:6).
- He will be a fine, human specimen. Daniel says in this prophetic regard, “*whose look was more stout than his fellows*” (Daniel 7:20). He also adds, this false leader will be “*a king of fierce countenance*” (Daniel 8:23). The Hebrew for this last word can also be translated “strong.” Mankind always places a premium value on the outer look of any leader. The more square jaw, the better. The taller, the better. The nice the facial features, the better. The more tanned the skin, the better. The more muscle mass, the better. He’ll have all this and more.
- He will possess miraculous power. Paul says concerning this concept, “*Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders*” (2 Thessalonians 2:9).
- He will change times and laws. Again, we appeal to Daniel’s prophecy, “*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 time*” (Daniel 7:25). We aren’t told exactly how he will go about seeking to change time and laws, but just that he will. Think of how

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<sup>4</sup> Hampton Keathley III, *Studies In Revelation* (Biblical Studies Press, 1997): 227.

much of our world is tied to biblical thinking. Our calendar is built around the concept of literal seven day week, which originates in creation. And then there is the B.C./ A.D. nature of the calendar or Latin for “before Christ” and for “in the year of our Lord” (Anno Domini) respectively. Will he change the calendar? Will he attempt to change time which is also related to a 24 hour creation day in order to pull it away from its divine origin (Genesis 1). He will most certainly move to reinterpret Judeo-Christian laws in a secular, atheistic, humanistic, lawless fashion. He will be skilled at getting people to think the new immorality is highly moral, that lawbreakers are the lawful ones and vice versa, that laws meant to protect and provide security for nations and people need to be relaxed for a variety of vain, power-building notions, that former laws, rules, and regulations are outdated, restrictive, puritanical, and digressive, even slavish. His political platform will be easy to identify: True freedom will come from embracing my lawless nature. Because of their love of sin (Romans 3), the world will walk in lock-step behind his vile, vicious leadership.

- He will claim divine status. The false prophet, or the second member of his Satanic trinity, will use his miraculous powers to motivate people to worship the Anti-Christ as the true Christ: <sup>11</sup> *Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon.* <sup>12</sup> *He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.* <sup>13</sup> *He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men* (Revelation 13).

There is much more we could add, but this brief discussion gives us a better idea of the rider on the White Horse, who merely represents the culmination of all the false Messiah's Jesus says will permeate the earth in the final days. Deception and false teaching will be rampant, and the world, which is and will throw off sound biblical teaching, will be primed and prepared to be wowed by this man of all men. With little resistance, cognitively, theologically, and/or emotionally, they will embrace him as the answer to all of man's global issues. In his person will supposedly be the hope for the world to finally know utopia. They will, however, be sorely mistaken, as he, the agent of Satan will be one who will erect devilish dystopia prior to the Lord's appearance.

The opening of the tribulation will be denoted by signs of mass religious deception, with people turning to false Messiahs left and right, while rejecting the true Messiah, Jesus. It will be a time of global religious deception like the world has never known, and even now we, who have eyes of faith, can readily see how people are being primed for end-times. The toleration of leaders who are lawless, the embracing of anything and everything but Christianity, the permitting of atheists to hold opening prayers at city council meetings, the motivation of the IRS by atheistic groups to make sure Christian pastors aren't saying anything political objectionable by scouring their web-sites, the Justice Department failing to enforce existing laws, we, as saints, know the times do, to quote Colson again, smell of sunset which will lead to really dark days prior to the true Christ's return.

In light of all of this, I must ask some pragmatic questions.

First, what is our obligation, as Christ-followers, in an age where the Spirit of the Anti-Christ is alive and well and growing leaps and bounds daily? The answer should be on your lips instantly: To point people to THE Christ and to warn people who are following false Christs. Are you fulfilling your Christ-ordained commission? How many folks will be in heaven because you said what needed saying in order to wake them up spiritually, with the Spirit's help of course.

Second, we need to make sure we are not doing anything to entertain the thinking of the Anti-Christ. His deception is spread in every way possible from supposedly harmless self-help books you might read which espouse New Age concepts, to video games you play as a teenager:

- Dark Souls (PS3)
- God of War
- The Witcher 3 Wild Hunt (PS4)
- Diablo III Reaper of Souls: The Ultimate Evil Edition (PS 4)
- Lords of the Fallen (PS 4). A challenging, action-packed medieval fantasy game about a world ruled by a fallen god. Sounds familiar.

Not that all of these games are questionable. My point simple is this: Are you evaluating what you are playing? Is it tied to concepts extoling our Adversary in any fashion? Are you paying attention as you are playing, or are you just blindly playing?

And what about all those highly questionable TV shows which dabble in the Devils business?

- Ghost Hunters on Syfy. This is televisions #1 paranormal reality series.
- Ghost Adventures.
- Paranormal State
- Fact or Faked: Paranormal Files
- Psychic Kids

This is not to overlook other tools of our Adversary like horoscopes, palm readers, clairvoyants and the like. We should, by nature, steer clear of anything tainted by him, and we should naturally embrace those wholesome, biblically sound things which bring true light and life to the soul. Got anything you need to get rid of?

Third, we should vote for leaders who will at least uphold, not change or alter or Judeo-Christian based laws, laws which transcend time and culture. We should also hold leaders accountable, regardless of their political party, who would seek to codify carnal behavior.

Fourth, should you not be a follower of Jesus, by faith in Him as your Savior, should you be duped and deceived right now, it is my prayer for you to respond to the Spirit's call on your life so that you might pass from spiritual darkness to light for all eternity. Jesus is waiting for you to make the move toward Him.

Great days of darkness, indeed, are upon us; however, this is also a perfect time to shine the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The world offers man a false, temporary peace, but only Jesus offers man a lasting, permanent peace. As He promised in the book of John:

“Peace I leave with you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 14:27).

