

HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WORLD

The Holy Spirit restrains evil in the world. "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. 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" (II Thessalonians 2:7-8). If it were not for the Holy Spirit's restraining influence, the world would be totally polluted by evil government, false religions, and moral corruption. The Holy Spirit indwells the believers in this age of evil. There is a reason Satan is called "the god of this world." Apostasy and immorality are his inventions, and the world is his playground. The Holy Spirit will restrain until He is taken out of the way at the rapture of the church. Then the "lawless one," i.e., Antichrist will do "the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception..." (II Thessalonians 2:9-10). The tribulation will begin after the presence of the Holy Spirit is removed at the rapture of the church. Every Christian who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit will be gone. Chafer points out, "There can be no separation between the Holy Spirit and the church..." The myth that the world will get better until Christ returns, is false. The world has been getting worse since Jesus was on earth the first time, and it will continue to get worse until He returns. The church will be removed from the world when "He who now restrains" is taken away. When the influence of the Holy Spirit is gone, the unbelieving world will have what it wants, and Antichrist will have what he wants. Only the return of Christ to earth will save this world from the coming "lawless one."