What is the Christian Rebellion?

II Thessalonians 2: 1-5.

The verses in the above text are talking about what has to happen to the church before the rapture occurs and the man of lawlessness, (the antichrist), is revealed. It says there will be a 'rebellion'. (NIV version).

There has been some different views as to what the 'rebellion' means in verse 3. The KJ version translates the word as 'falling away.' The word in the Greek text is 'apostasia'. Transliterated into English, we get the word apostacy.

The ISBE defines the word as: APOSTASY (a-pos'-ta-si), (a-pos'-tat)

The apostasia- **"a standing away from": i.e. a falling away, a withdrawal, a defection. Not found in the English Versions of the Bible, but used twice in the New Testament, in the Greek original, to express abandonment of the faith.**

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The subject of the first five verses in the text noted above is the day of rapture of the Church, (v-1). Our being gathered to Him. We're told in I Thessalonians 5:16-18, "that the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words."

While I Thessalonians tells us of the mechanics of the rapture, II Thessalonians tells us when to expect it to happen.

Before we proceed to further explain the timing of the event, lets clear up the meaning of verse 3. Some have used the Greek word 'apostacy' to mean a 'departure.' By translating the word as such, they explain the verse is talking about the departure of the Church, meaning it's rapture. However, as noted in the ISBE, the word 'apostacy' has a negative connotation rather than a positive. Meaning it's not talking about a departure of the church into the arms of the Lord, (the rapture), but a negative departure, of which the body of believers is actually 'falling away,' or as the NIV version defines it, 'rebellion,' meaning that there will be departure from a previous stand. It goes on to say that this happening must occur before 'the man of lawlessness', (the antichrist), is revealed, (v-3).

We know the 'man of lawlessness' is the antichrist by the further description in verse 4, which says, " he opposes and exalts himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, and even sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God."

So before the rapture of the church occurs and before the antichrist is revealed, this event noted in verse 3, the 'apostacy', (rebellion-NIV version), has to first happen.

Since the rebellion, (falling away), is a negative connotation, and since it's talking about an event prior to the rapture, we need to compare such an event with other scripture which alludes to the position of the church in the final days. (see teaching articles on the seven churches, notably the last two churches , Philadelphia and Laodicea.)

Luke 18:8 records the words of Jesus. He says "when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" -(He's talking about the church. Where is all the faithful? To make such a statement would certainly lead us to believe that the church will diminish to a small group prior to His return.)

Those who have been Christians for a length of time, (30-40 years), can verify that the church has truly diminished from the teachings of the scriptures that used to be the central part of the church. The doctrinal teaching of the Deity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, salvation only through Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the rapture of the church, the millennial reign on earth after the return of Jesus Christ. The fact that there is a hell which will be thrown into the Lake of Fire where all who have not been saved will end up as well.

Not only is there not a clarity on the above doctrines but many pulpits refuse to acknowledge that there is a hell. Some even deny the fact of sin, and some even call sin low self esteem. Many others deny that the Bible is the true Word of God, without error, co- authored by the Holy Spirit. Large denominations that were formed as standing on the strict Word of God have now turned away from it as being inspired by God.

The Barna Reports:

32% of Christians do not believe the Bible changes things. That it has no power.

41% of Christians do not believe the Bible commands us to attend church.

43% of Christians do not read their Bible except at church.

14% of Christians do not read their Bible but once a week.

2% of Christians read their Bible daily.

With these statistics along with the facts noted above concerning the fact that many churches no longer use the Bible as the standard for their faith, it's easy to verify that the church, the body of Christ, has not only fallen away from it's primary purpose, but is continuing to fall away at a fast rate.

The epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus along with Peter's epistles teach us that in the last days the atmosphere of the church would be in such a state.

The scriptures once again give us a picture of the last days. How much further will the church decline, fall away from the scriptures, only the Lord knows. But He gives us this text in II Thessalonians to let His people know they should be spiritually prepared to meet the Lord in the air, ( the rapture of the church), which will happen just before the antichrist comes on the scene bringing a pseudo peace with Israel.

There's a rebellion going on. Wake up Jesus said, you're redemption is near!